







# MAN INTO WOMAN









EINAR WEGENER (ANDREAS SPARRE) ABOUT 1920

# MAN INTO WOMAN

An Authentic Record of a Change of Sex

*The true story of the miraculous  
transformation of the Danish painter  
Einar Wegener (Andreas Sparre)*

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*With ~~25~~ Illustrations*

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## INTRODUCTION

To the reader unfamiliar with the unhappy byways of sexual pathology, the story told in this book must seem incredibly fantastic. Incredible as it may seem, it is true. Or, rather, the facts are true, though I think there is room for differences of opinion about the interpretation of the facts.

There would seem to be no doubt about the following points. A well-known Danish painter, whose identity is shrouded in this book under the name of Andreas Sparre, was born in the 'eighties of the last century. At about the age of twenty he married, and was sufficiently normal both psychologically and physically to be able to fulfil his functions as a husband. Some years later a purely fortuitous happening led him to dress up as a woman, and the disguise was so successful that he followed it by dressing up as a woman on several occasions, on each of which those who were in the secret were surprised at his apparent femininity. In fun, one of his friends dubbed him, when disguised as a woman, Lili. Gradually he began to feel a change taking place in himself. He began to feel that "Lili" was a real individual, who shared the same body as his male self—Andreas. The second personality, Lili, became more and more important, and Andreas became convinced that he was a sort of twin being, part male and part



female in the one body. He began to suffer from disturbances every month in the shape of bleedings from the nose and elsewhere, which he came to regard as representative of menstruation, and he sought the help of many doctors, who, however, were unable to relieve him.

He began to study books on sexual pathology and gradually came to the conclusion that although his external organs were those of a male, and quite normal (though perhaps rather undeveloped), yet his body contained in it the internal sexual organs of a female in addition.

Some of the doctors to whom he went thought him neurotic, some thought him homosexual; but he himself denied the truth of both these diagnoses. One doctor treated him with X-rays, and later on Andreas attributed the shrunken state of the female sexual organs which were found in his abdomen to the destructive effect of this X-ray treatment.

Gradually the female personality, Lili, took on such importance that Andreas felt that, unless in some way his male self could be made to give place to Lili, he could not go on living. By this time he was in his forties, and his failure to find any doctor who could help him to realize his desire to become a woman led him to the project of suicide if nothing should happen within the next year.

Just as things seemed at their worst he met a famous German doctor from Dresden, who agreed that Andreas was probably an intermediate sexual type, furnished, by some sport of nature, with both male and female gonads. He explained that

there were probably rudimentary ovaries in Andreas' abdomen, but that these were unable to develop properly because of the inhibiting influence of the testicles which Andreas also possessed.

He proposed that Andreas should go to Berlin, where certain investigations were to be undertaken. If these investigations confirmed his suppositions he promised to remove Andreas' male organs and transplant into him ovaries from a young woman, which would, as the work of the Steinach school had shown, activate the rudimentary ovaries lying dormant in Andreas' abdomen.

Andreas went to Berlin. The investigations confirmed the German doctor's theory, and Andreas embarked on a series of operations. The first one was castration. His testicles were removed. A few months later he went to Dresden, where his penis was also removed, his abdomen was opened, and the presence of rudimentary ovaries was established, and at the same time ovarian tissue from a healthy young woman of twenty-six was transplanted into him. A little later he underwent another operation, the nature of which is not explained, though it had something to do with the insertion of a canula.

By this time he felt himself to be entirely a woman. The Danish authorities issued him a new passport as a female in the name of Lili Elbe, and the King of Denmark declared his marriage null and void. With his consent, and indeed at his suggestion, his former wife married a mutual friend of theirs in Rome.

A French painter, who had been a friend of

Andreas and his wife for many years, now fell in love with Lili, and proposed marriage to her.

Before consenting to the marriage Lili made another journey to the German surgeon at Dresden to tell him that she had received the offer of marriage and to ask him if he could carry out yet another operation on her to enable her to function completely as a woman, to take the female part in intercourse, and to become a mother. An operation for this purpose was carried out; but shortly afterwards Lili died in Dresden of heart trouble.

There seems to be no question that the above statements are true. The case was kept secret at first, but through a friend's indiscretion the secret leaked out, and the case was reported in the German and Danish newspapers and caused a great sensation in the year 1931, some time before Lili's death.

The story of this strange case has been written by Niels Hoyer, partly from his own knowledge, partly from material dictated by Lili herself, partly from Lili's diaries, and partly from letters written by Lili and other persons concerned. The biographer states that the surgeon who performed the operation has passed his account of the case as correct.

The case falls within the domain of sexual pathology, and comes within the category of sexual intermediacy. We are accustomed to classify individuals as male or female, the classification

being made at birth by inspection of the external genital organs. But modern sexology has pointed out the inadequacy of this rough and ready classification. It must be remembered that in the early embryo it is impossible, even by the most careful examination, to determine the sex. Gradually a little eminence grows up which forms the rudiments of the sexual organs. At first the rudiments of the organs of both sexes develop, but later only one set continues developing, while the other set remains very rudimentary. If development proceeds normally, the individual differentiates sufficiently to be classified for all practical purposes as a male or as a female. But even in the most normal and unambiguous individual, the rudiments of the organs of the other sex are present throughout life. Thus the male possesses a rudimentary uterus and the female a rudimentary penis. So far, we have been speaking of the primary sexual organs, or genital organs.

But there are a number of other, or secondary sexual characters (breasts, width of pelvis, hair, etc.) which differ in the two sexes, and individuals who are classified as male may have secondary sexual characters of a female type and vice versa. When carefully investigated even the apparently most normal male may be found to have certain physical sex characters approximating to the female type, and the apparently most normal female to have sex characters approximating to the male type. One is led to the conclusion that the hundred-per-cent male and the hundred-per-cent female are theoretical types which do not exist in reality.

So far we have dealt only with the physical

sexual characters, but there are psychological sexual characters which differ as between the sexes, too. Sometimes the presence of marked physical characteristics of the opposite sex is not accompanied by any noticeable psychological intermediacy, or by any change in the direction of sexual desire, i.e., by any trace of homosexual feeling. In other cases some degree of homosexual feeling is present and in yet other cases the sexual intermediacy is marked much more psychologically than it is physically. For a full discussion of this subject the reader is referred to Professor Gregorio Marañón's book, *The Evolution of Sex and Intersexual Conditions*, which is available in an English translation.

Cases occur, though rarely, where an individual possesses the genital organs of one sex, and in addition more or less complete genital organs belonging to the other sex as well. Such anomalies are known as hermaphrodites, though in human beings the hermaphroditism always seems to be incomplete. There is a small number of curious cases of this sort recorded in sexological literature, though no other case, so far as I know, has been so extreme, or so well recorded, as the case of Andreas Sparre.

Thus, when I was a medical student in Sydney, Australia, about the year 1912, a man was admitted to the wards of my hospital suffering from regularly recurring hæmorrhages, which were thought to be due to kidney disease. Investigation showed that although his external genital organs were normal, and he was married and able to perform the sexual act as a male, his body contained ovaries.

In Berlin in 1923, I saw, at the clinic of a colleague, an individual who was apparently male, but who felt himself to be a female just as Andreas did. This patient, too, had his male organs removed at his own request, and was given injections of ovarian extract. No operation was ever undertaken to determine whether ovaries were present in his body or not. I saw him—or her—again in 1926, after the removal of the male organs, and quite recently I received a report about the case. The individual is very unhappy, and has not succeeded in becoming completely a woman.

Professor Steinach, of Vienna, has for some decades been carrying on a series of investigations into sexual physiology, and has had considerable success in changing males into females and females into males among lower animals, such as rats and guinea-pigs. He has even been successful in enabling a formerly male rat to develop breast glands which function to the extent of producing milk to nourish the litter of another rat; but up to the present he has not succeeded in completing the transformation so that a former male could become pregnant and give birth to a litter.

Among birds, there are a number of cases on record where hens, which have laid eggs and produced many chickens, have gradually changed their plumage, begun to crow, and developed into cocks, and as cocks have fertilized other hens.

But in human beings, although mild grades of sexual intermediacy are by no means rare, cases like that of Andreas Sparre arise but seldom; and I cannot help thinking that until we know more about sexual physiology it is unwise to

carry out, even at the patient's own request, such operations as were performed in this case. It would, I think, have been better to try the effect of psychological treatment. Andreas Sparre might either have been cured, or at least enabled to adapt himself to life. By proper psychological treatment the duplication of personality might have been resolved and he might have been enabled to lead a reasonably happy life instead of embarking on a series of painful and dangerous operations which ended only with his death.

There seems to be no need to disclose the real names of the persons mentioned in this book, except to say that Andreas Sparre was the well-known Danish painter Einar Wegener.

*Harley Street,  
London, W.1.*

NORMAN HAIRE

## FOREWORD

IN accordance with Lili Elbe's last wishes, I have arranged the papers she left behind in the form of this book. It is a veracious life story, recorded by a person whose earthly course assumed the shape of an unparalleled and incredible tragedy of fate, the life story of a person whose afflictions were outside the range of our ordinary ideas.

The German doctor whose bold operations enabled the mortally ill and despairing Danish painter Einar Wegener (Andreas Sparre) to go on living in complete harmony with the dictates of his nature has approved the book in its German version. At Lili Elbe's desire, fictitious names have been employed for the persons who figure in her narrative.

She has retained her own name, chosen out of gratitude to the German city in which she fulfilled her human destiny.

The German edition of this book was preceded by a Danish edition, and arrangements are being made for editions of the book to appear in other languages.

Lili Elbe's book must be dedicated in gratitude to her great helper in Dresden, her life comrade in the sunny south, and her truest friend in Paris.

NIELS HOYER





# MAN INTO WOMAN

## I

**T**HE scene is Paris in the Quartier Saint Germain. The time a February evening in 1930. In a quiet street which harbours a stately palace there is a small restaurant, whose regular customers are foreigners, and mostly artists.

Among them this evening were Andreas and Grete Sparre, two Danish painters, and their Italian friend Ernesto Rossini, with his elegant French wife Elena. The friends had not seen each other for a whole year. One couple had been travelling in the North, the other in the South of Europe.

"Skaal !" cried Andreas, in the good old Nordic way, and raised his glass. "This wine, children, is for the soul what alpine sun is for the body. And this reminds me of a glorious legend of the cathedral of Seville, which Grete and I were admiring a short time ago. Under the plinth of the highest column they have immured a sunbeam—that is the whole legend."

"Splendid !" cried Ernesto, with enthusiasm.

"Heavenly, Andreas !" chimed in Elena, warmly pressing his hand.

And Grete smiled happily and thoughtfully.

Grete and Ernesto exchanged a multitude of travel impressions—wanderings through museums and disreputable alleys in Cadiz and Antwerp, voyages of discovery through bazaars in the Balkans and in marine stores in The Hague and Amsterdam. Each tried to outdo the other. Thus Grete ; thus Ernesto—completely absorbed in their subject, their keen eyes alight with the enthusiasm of the artist.

Meanwhile, Andreas was leaning attentive, while Elena was whispering in his ear the latest amusing, and even scandalous, anecdotes from Rome and Madrid.

"You are not drinking too much, Andreas?" suddenly inquired Elena, pausing in the midst of one of the "latest" incredible stories, only to be related in a whisper. . . . She had noticed the growing nervous excitement of her companion. "You want to be fit and well to-night."

Ernesto and Grete caught up Elena's words. Grete gazed mutely at Andreas. Ernesto took his friend's hand. "Is Lili causing you trouble again?" he inquired, full of solicitude.

"You've said it, Ernesto," replied Andreas very seriously. "This condition is gradually becoming intolerable. Lili is no longer content to share her existence with me. She wants to have an existence of her own. I don't know whether you understand me. . . . I—I'm no longer any use. Cannot do anything more. I'm finished. Lili has known this for a long time. That's how matters stand. And consequently she rebels more vigorously every day. What shall I do with myself? The question may sound strange, though only fools

think they are indispensable, irreplaceable. But not another word of this. Let us drink ! Let us drink a fiery, sweet Asti, to please Elena !”

“Bravo !” cried Elena, not taking her eyes off Andreas, who then rose wearily and made for the bar.

“Tell me quickly,” whispered Elena, looking towards her friend, “how is your husband ? I don’t like his looks.”

Grete had lost her smile. “He has never been worse.”

Ernesto and Elena gazed silently at their friend.

“I have almost given up all hope of saving him,” said Grete very softly, “unless a miracle——”

Elena interrupted her sharply. “Look here, you’re talking of a miracle.” Grete regarded her friend inquiringly. “Well, listen. A very good friend of ours is now in Paris. He comes from Dresden. He is a woman’s doctor. He rang us up early to-day, shortly after we had spoken to Andreas on the telephone. And then I thought at once : ‘If anybody can help Andreas, it is this doctor from Dresden.’ And the matter is urgent, as the doctor must return to Germany to-morrow afternoon. I will make an appointment with him this evening.”

Grete made a listless movement with her hand. “Dearest Elena, it is useless. Andreas won’t see any more doctors.”

Elena seized both Grete’s hands.

“Grete, dearest, now you must not contradict ; this time you must obey, and I will call on the Professor this very evening. I know the Professor will be able to help him.”

Grete slowly lit a cigarette. She blew away clouds of blue smoke and stared into the haze.

Then she said slowly, without excitement, and distinctly.

"Good, Elena ; go and see your German Professor, and I will persuade Andreas to call upon you early in the morning."

Andreas returned at this moment, holding up two bottles of Asti as if they were booty.

When Grete and Andreas were strolling at a later hour along the avenue near which their studio dwelling was situated, she avowed at first cautiously, but afterwards with energy, what she had arranged with Elena. Andreas was beside himself. He stood still in the middle of the road. He would not be examined either by a German or by a French, or by an Indian mountebank. He was through with these bloodsuckers.

He had been ill for many years. Innumerable doctors and specialists had examined him—without result. Now he was utterly tired. Life had become a torment to him.

Nobody understood what was wrong with him. But his sufferings were of the strangest kind. A specialist in Versailles had without further ado declared him to be an hysterical subject ; apart from this he was a perfectly normal man, who had only to behave reasonably like a man to become perfectly well again ; all that the patient lacked was the conviction that he *was* perfectly healthy and normal.

A young doctor, likewise in Versailles, had

indeed pronounced that "everything was not as it should be" . . . but he had dismissed Andreas with the following reassuring words: "Don't distress yourself about your physical state. You are so healthy and unimpaired that you could stand anything."

A radiologist had been very active, but he had nearly killed Andreas.

The diagnosis of a medical personage from Vienna, a man of somewhat mystical temperament and a friend of Steinach, pointed in the right direction. "Only a bold and daring doctor can help you," this man had declared; "but where will you find such a doctor to-day?"

Thereupon Andreas had taken heart and approached three surgeons.

The first had declared that he had never in all his life performed "beautifying operations"; the second examined exclusively the blind-gut; and the third declared Andreas to be "perfectly crazy".

Most people would probably have agreed with this third specialist: for Andreas believed that in reality he was not a *man*, but a *woman*.

And he had grown tired of it all, and sworn to himself that he would not visit any more doctors. He had made up his mind to end his existence. The first of May was to be the fatal day. Spring is a dangerous time for people who are sick and tired.

He had thought over everything, even the mode of his departure. It was to be, to some extent, a polite obeisance to Nature. Now it was February. March and April would be waiting months. A reprieve . . . he felt calm

The only thing which tormented him, which pained him unspeakably, was the thought of his wife—the loyal friend and companion of his life.

Grete Sparre was an artist of great talent. Her pictures made an exciting and tingling impression, like a vapour from the jungles of Paris.

Perhaps because their marriage had been, above all, a comradeship almost from the beginning, they both found life pleasant and worth while only when they were together.

They were hardly adult and were still attending the Copenhagen academy of art when they had married. A few days before the wedding Andreas had sold his very first picture at his very first exhibition. They had lived mostly abroad, chiefly in Paris, and this life abroad had contributed to strengthen the tie which bound them.

It was therefore inevitable that Andreas frequently had moments when it seemed as if he were behaving like a traitor towards Grete. He had been forced to recognize that he could work no longer, and he was apprehensive of becoming a burden on Grete. This thought had been worrying him for months, poisoning the fount of his enjoyment.

Grete was aware of his thoughts. Yet she suspected that whatever she proposed to offer in the way of new hope would prove futile. There were so many things that bound them together, so many struggles, so many memories, bright and dark, and, perhaps most of all, Lili. For Andreas was, in fact, two beings : a man, Andreas, and a girl, Lili. They might even be called twins who had both taken possession of one body at the same time.

In character they were entirely different.

Gradually Lili had gained such predominance over Andreas that she could still be traced in him, even after she had retired, but never the reverse. Whereas he felt tired and seemed to welcome death, Lili was joyous and in the freshness of youth.

She had become Grete's favourite model. Lili wandered through her best works.

Grete felt herself to be the protectress of this carefree and helpless Lili. And Andreas felt himself to be the protector of both. His ultimate hope was to die in order that Lili might awaken to a new life.



## II

THE next morning Grete spoke affectionately to him, pointing out lightly that he must call upon Elena if for no other reason than as an act of courtesy. When there he could always find an excuse if he could not bring himself to visit her German Professor.

An hour later he was on his way to Passy, where Elena lived : punctually at twelve o'clock her car stopped in front of the house where the German doctor was staying. While Elena was pulling the bell, Andreas whispered : "Perhaps it will turn out quite interesting to see your German celebrity face to face, as he belongs to a race in whom interest in scientific investigation is so strongly pronounced that this interest——"

"For heaven's sake," interrupted Elena, "don't start delivering a lecture on the doorstep."

Andreas seized his friend's hand. "Elena, I only mean . . . I only hope . . . How shall I express it?"

Elena looked very seriously at her friend, who was pale with excitement. "Go on, Andreas."

And then he blurted out : ". . . That he will not regard me merely as a sorry renegade . . . because . . . I would rather be a woman than a man."

"No, Andreas, I will answer for that."

Footsteps were heard inside the house.

The door was opened and a servant received

them ; but before he had found time to announce them a tall, thin gentleman advanced to meet them. A dark-blue *sakkoanzug*\* emphasized the austere elegance of his appearance in an almost military manner. His hair, which was brushed in a smooth mass across his high forehead, was dark, while his small moustache, trimmed in American style, was of a light fair colour.

When Andreas later on tried to recall these features to memory his mind was a mere blank every time. From those blue, deep-set eyes, which were bright and dark at the same time, radiated a strange, captivating charm.

It was Werner Kreutz.

Andreas felt his heart beat faster. While the Professor was conducting them with a somewhat ceremonious cordiality into the drawing-room, exchanging the while a few words with Elena, it occurred to Andreas for the first time in his life that German was a beautiful and musical language.

As in a dream he listened to the conversation between the two, even when Elena was telling the Professor about him and his doleful story, throwing him now and again, as if accidentally, a quick, affectionate glance.

Andreas could think of nothing, and was conscious of nothing but the doctor's voice. It was as if he were laid under a spell, the spell of this voice. It reminded him of the Professor's eyes ; it, too, was light and dark at the same time. Both the eyes and the voice penetrated into the innermost recesses of his soul.

And what would this voice have to say to him ?

\* Frock-coat.

And these eyes, what would their glance announce to him?

A death sentence? Did he expect anything other than this? Did he expect anything at all? Had he come here for any definite purpose?

The Professor stood in front of him, hardly looked at him, and spoke only a few brief words to him. And Andreas followed the professor into an anteroom, where he was told to undress. "Now I feel like a sleepwalker," thought Andreas in a vague and remote manner. He must obey, without questioning. He wanted to say something, and fumbled for German words.

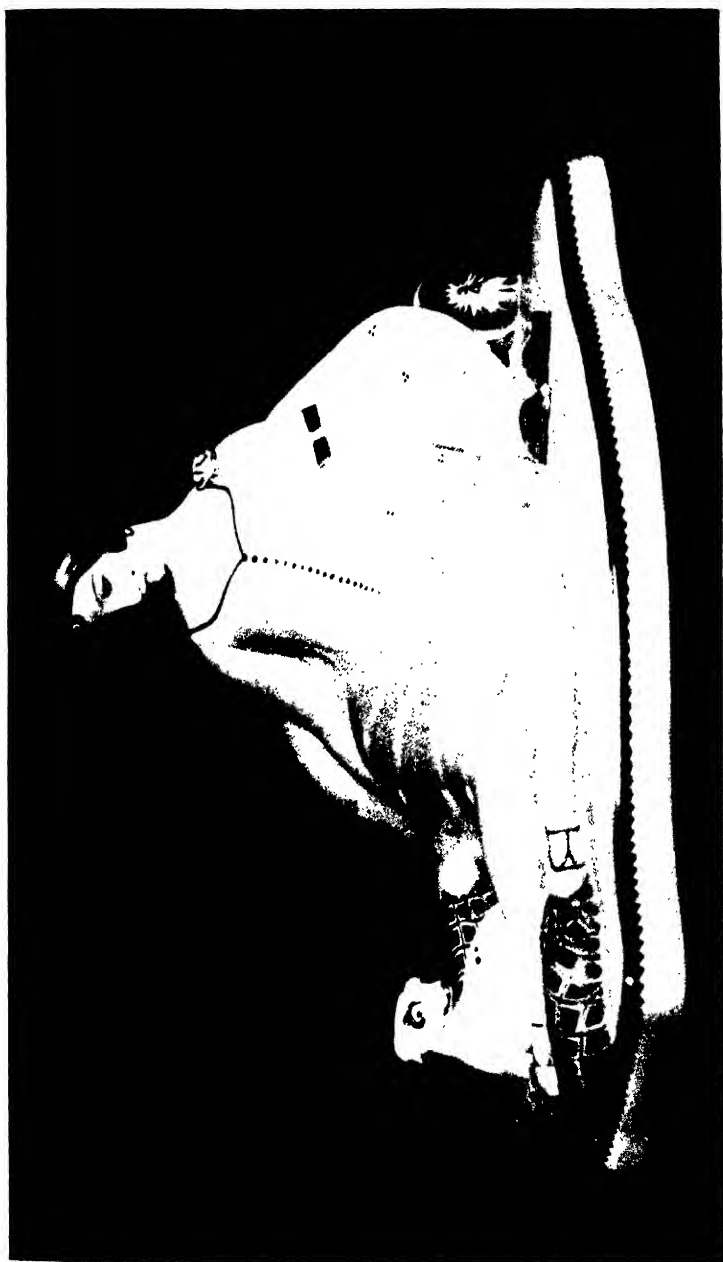
"You need not give me any explanations, sir," the Professor interrupted him considerably.

"It hurts here, doesn't it, and there, and likewise there, doesn't it?" And his hand slowly glided over Andreas' body. All that Andreas needed to do was to nod quickly and shyly. An almost terrifying astonishment gripped him. How did this strange man know where his pains were located?

And this astonishment grew into amazement when the Professor, to whom Elena had handed a bundle of photographs of Lili, took the portraits out of the envelope and laid them on the table in the order of the years marked on their backs, which the Professor had not observed.

"There we have the development clearly marked," said the Professor bluntly. Andreas did not even nod.

"I hear you have had Röntgen Rays treatment by a radiologist; but unless he previously made chemical or microscopical examinations it is impossible to say whether he exerted an





unfavourable effect upon the germ glands, and perhaps upon any existing ovaries . . . this must be disclosed by a further examination."

"Ovaries !" Andreas almost shrieked. "Then . . . I . . . have . . ." He could get no further. He could scarcely breathe from excitement. Everything was going round.

"Extremely probable," replied the Professor, imperturbable and positive ; yet the sound of his voice seemed slightly muffled, very soft and discreet. Andreas was to be reminded continually of this lightly veiled voice, and not merely Andreas. "For I think you possess both male and female organs, and that neither of them has sufficient room to develop properly. It is fortunate for you that you have such a pronounced feminine feeling. That's why I think I shall be able to help you."

Andreas had to clutch at his heart. He leaned over, in order not to miss a single word that fell from the lips of this amazing man. He stared fixedly at him, expecting to find confirmation of his words in his glance.

"Well, Professor, what am I ? . . . What . . . ?"

The Professor rose, paced up and down the room for a while as if to think the matter over, and then turned to Andreas again. And once more Andreas drank in his words.

"Come to me in Germany. I hope I shall be able to give you a new life and a new youth."

These words were uttered with extreme simplicity. Andreas stood up and struggled for speech.

"Then it will be Lili who survives ?"

"Yes," answered Werner Kreutz. "I will operate on you, and give you new and strong ovaries."

This operation will remove the stoppage in your development which occurred at the age of puberty. But first of all you will have to undergo various treatment of a preliminary nature in Berlin. Then you can come to me in Dresden."

With these words ended the serious and fateful conversation between the strange man and Andreas, who was still sitting a little breathless when the Professor brought Elena into his consulting-room. And she smiled to conceal her emotion.

The doctor stood apart from them thoughtfully, and looked suddenly at Andreas and then at Elena. "May I speak quite openly?" he said, glancing from one to the other.

"Please do," replied Andreas. "I have no secrets from Elena."

"Well, then," began the Professor, "I hear that you are married."

Andreas blushed with embarrassment.

"Your marriage . . . perhaps you can tell me something about it, because, as a doctor, at any rate . . ."

Each of them was conscious of something fantastic at this moment, although the question seemed the most natural thing in the world.

"Perhaps I had better go," suggested Elena, full of solicitude for her friend.

Andreas caught hold of her. "No, Elena, no, don't go."

The Professor came to the assistance of both. His smile worked at this moment like a deliverance. "What is the attitude, for instance, of—I thought I heard the name Lili just now—well, of Lili, towards men? I mean, do men interest Lili?"

"Yes, indeed," laughed Elena ; "it is positively incredible what an attraction Lili has for the other sex."

Andreas attempted to interrupt her. The Professor was now laughing heartily.

"Let the lady go on, please." And Andreas had perforce to listen while she continued : "I have seen it with my own eyes at various carnivals and balls."

The Professor became serious again. "What you have just told me, madam, is all of a piece with the picture I have formed in my own mind. . . . For the rest, the operation which has become necessary, especially as it is the first of its kind, will create a number of remarkable situations, not least, from a legal point of view. But"—and with this he came close to Andreas and took his hand—"I promise you I will not leave Lili in the lurch and that I will assist her with her first independent steps into life."

Andreas looked down at the stranger's hand. He did not know what he ought to do. He looked helplessly around the room, then released the doctor's hand and stretched out both arms to Elena, as if imploring help. She hurried to him and embraced him maternally.

"Elena," he stammered through his tears, "the life which is now coming with which I shall have nothing whatever to do . . . this life, Elena, you have saved. Without you, Elena, I should never have come here."

Werner Kreutz was standing in front of the window, looking silently into the street.

Andreas went towards him, weeping. The Professor took his hands and said quietly : "I understand you. I know how much you have suffered."



### III

**F**OR hours Grete had been waiting in the little studio for her husband's return.

When at last he entered, he was as pale as death. Grete hurried to him. She led him to the sofa, upon which he collapsed helplessly. Grete remained sitting by him for a long time without saying a word.

When at length Andreas began to speak, she listened to him with closed eyes, and Andreas too spoke with closed eyes. How much of it all was a dream? And how much reality? Did that which was then beginning mean redemption, *the* redemption? Whither led the way for him, for her, for both?

And Andreas, completely upset by all that he had just experienced, told his story in broken words.

At length he rose to his feet. Without a word he took Grete's hands and led her to the easel in front of the broad window, through which the northern sky was lighting up the room. A large picture was leaning against the easel, upon which three female figures were to be seen. One of the women bore Grete's features, another bore Elena's features, and the third figure bore Andreas'—Lili's features!

"Grete," he then said, "be thankful that you

have believed in Lili to the last. You know that I have never been able to doubt her. I knew that the day would come. . . . I am so happy."

On the evening of this fateful day Andreas collapsed. His powers of resistance were at an end.

Not until then did he dare to acknowledge to himself how great his torment and despair had been during these last years. Now he could be frank with himself. Now he *must* be. . . . Yet he badly needed help, but had a friend who would assist him, his brother-in-law, in whom he had confided for years and who knew the secret of Lili. Andreas poured out his heart to his distant relative.

"Paris.

"29th January, 1930.

"Dear Christian,

"You have not heard from me for a long time, because I have been able to tell you nothing good about Lili. From time to time I have been examined by several doctors, but without result. Throughout they prescribed sedative remedies, which left me no better nor wiser than I was before. For I want to know what is happening to me, even if it hurts. After consulting with Grete, Elena took me to one of her personal acquaintances, who received me three hours before he was leaving Paris. Then something happened which sounds almost like a miracle ! I had a consultation with the famous surgeon and woman's doctor Professor Werner Kreutz,

of Dresden. Strangely enough, he resembled you. He examined me a long time, and then declared that my case was so rare that only one similar case had been known up till now. He added that in the condition in which I am at present, I could hardly be regarded as a living creature, because the ray treatment had been a great mistake, especially as it had not been preceded by microscopical examination. Now he fears that this treatment in the dark may have destroyed my organs—male as well as female. Consequently, he wants me to go to Berlin as quickly as possible for the purpose of a microscopical examination.

*“Some time afterwards he will operate on me himself. He wants to remove the dead (and formerly imperfect) male organs, and to restore the female organs with new and fresh material. Then it will be Lili who will survive !*

“Her weak girl’s body will then be able to develop, and she will feel as young as her new and fresh organs. Dear Christian, I am now sitting here and weeping like a child while I am writing you these lines. It seems so like a miracle that I dare not believe it. One thing, however, consoles me—that were it otherwise I must soon die. Grete and I believe we are dreaming, and are fearful of waking. It is too wonderful to think that Lili will be able to live, and that she will be the happiest girl in the world—and that this ghastly nightmare of my life is drawing to an end. This wretched comedy as a man ! Without Grete I should have thrown up the sponge long ago. But in these dark days I have

had a fresh opportunity of seeing what a splendid girl she is . . . she is an angel. Over-exertions, her own sufferings, have left her unscathed. She has contrived to work for two, now that I am no longer worth much. I do what I am able, of course, and have exhibited and sold with success in all the important Salons. But now all this is over. I am no longer fit for anything. I am like a wretched grub which is waiting to become a butterfly. The operation is urgent, and the doctor would like me to proceed to Berlin immediately, as some twenty days must elapse between the first examination and the operation. And I must be in Dresden on the day he is ready to create Lili. He will send me medicine, which I am to take, in order to support the internal organs and thereby keep me alive until then. For practical reasons I begged for some delay, and I told him that I should prefer so to arrange matters as to proceed to Berlin via Copenhagen, as I wanted first to hold an exhibition in Denmark. I would then proceed from Berlin to Dresden at the beginning of April.

"This does not particularly please the doctor ; but he understood that I had suggested this for practical reasons.

"Now, I do not know whether it is due to excitement, but my condition has worsened to such an extent that I no longer feel able to make preparations for an exhibition and attend to everything it involves—I realize that I have no time to lose.

"Hence, I want your help.

"Will you lend me the money for the operation and the stay in the nursing-home ? I do not know

how much it will cost. I only know that Elena has so arranged it that the Professor is taking an exceptionally low fee. Out of consideration for Grete I dare not take money from our savings; the less so as our trip to Rome and my illness has cost us so much.

"I—or we—have deposited many pictures with Messrs. Heyman and Haslund, of Copenhagen, and I estimate their value to be between 7,000 and 10,000 kronen. I do not, however, know what the operation will cost, but I estimate it will come to between 4,000 and 5,000 kronen in all. I give you all these pictures in Denmark by way of security in the event of my death—and in any event. If the affair turns out badly, the pictures can be sold, and if it turns out well, we can soon repay you the money. Our earning powers are good, and we have many large orders.

"Tell no one except my sister anything of the contents of this letter, and be good enough to let me know what you decide as quickly as possible, first by telegram and then by letter.

"It is only because I have the feeling that death is on my track that I send you this letter. Up till now I have never incurred debts in any quarter. Warmest greetings to you and the sister from Grete and

"Andreas."

Two days later his brother-in-law's answer arrived: a short telegram:

"Don't worry. Whatever you need is at your disposal."

Andreas breathed again ; he began to summon up new courage.

Werner Kreutz had promised to send him early news, the signal to strike his tent.

One evening he said to Grete : "I often find myself thinking of my old schoolmaster now. He used to tell us the story of the negroes of Saint Croix, who broke out into revolt a day before their emancipation from slavery. Now I understand their feelings. I feel I can wait no longer."

A few days later, on a Monday morning, Elena received a telegram from a friend in Berlin directing Andreas to arrive in Berlin not later than the following Saturday and to stay at a specified hotel, which the Professor frequented during his visits to Berlin. A letter would be awaiting Andreas in the hotel.

Two days later Andreas was on his way to Berlin.

Grete and Elena accompanied him to the train.

Since the arrival of the telegram he had scarcely uttered a word. He seemed like a man living in a dream. Every joy and every sorrow he shut up in his heart. Even at the moment of farewell he scarcely betrayed any excitement. To be alone . . . to get away . . . fleeing towards a new fate . . . fleeing from past and future . . . and—to refrain from thinking until the goal was reached. . . . What goal ?

## IV

**T**HE train moved slowly away. Andreas had a seat by the window.

Out of old habit he had lit a cigarette. One after another he smoked. . . . From time to time he mechanically flicked off the ashes.

He was a prey to that complete mental lassitude which so frequently supervenes upon hasty travel preparations the moment the traveller suddenly finds himself alone in the departing train.

Horrible ideas assailed him when he suddenly realized that he had now surrendered himself. He fell into a fever of apprehension.

Suddenly he had a vision of the two beloved faces. Grete . . . Elena . . . and gradually the two faces changed into one. . . . He had only one name for them both : home, and now, it occurred to him, Paris.

He looked out, as if he were seeking them : Paris . . . Elena . . . Grete.

When farewells were being said he had not once leaned out of the window. . . . The Eiffel Tower . . . the mirage in the sky of the towering dome : Sacré Cœur . . . Elena . . . Grete . . . all had vanished for ever.

For ever ? Yes, for ever ! And he, Andreas Sparre, would never return to Paris.

Perhaps another being. . . . He was unable to pursue the thought to its end.

Grete . . . Elena . . . Paris. . . . This triad accompanied him, the fugitive. Now he heard it suddenly in the rhythm of the train : fugitive . . . fugitive. . . .

The train raced through northern France.

Across the landscape new townships were springing up out of the ruins. Here and there were vast, strange-looking rectangles with fantastic crops. They were not cornfields : they were fields of crosses, soldiers' cemeteries, plantations of the dead. Cross set close to cross as far as eye could see.

And he thought of Grete. Why had he not allowed her to accompany him ? She had implored him to do so. And yet he had forced her to remain behind in Paris . . . and to wait. He pulled himself together, lit a cigarette, and put the thought out of his mind.

The train reached the frontier between France and Belgium. He gazed indifferently out of the window. The last seat in the compartment was now occupied.

Through Belgium the train crawled at a snail's pace. Andreas strolled up and down the dining-car and mixed a cocktail. It was not yet six o'clock. The train stopped at every tiny village. Passengers alighted and entered in a leisurely way, as if they had endless time on their hands.

Then the German frontier was reached, and a new engine imparted new energy to the journey. Slowly the night descended, and soon the train was rushing through the darkness.

Andreas had lingered over his meal in the dining-car and had drunk more wine than usual to deaden his feelings and lull the pain caused him by the



vibration and rolling of the train. But he must return to his compartment. He could scarcely keep on his feet. At length he sank back in his corner again, clenched his teeth, and closed his eyes. All his bridges were burned. Everything lay behind him. His whole life seemed to him to be something that was past, something that was lost.

He resolved not to think. But his brain gave him no rest. Would it not perhaps be best to abandon *this fantastic experiment?* For what it was proposed to do to him was only an experiment after all. Would it not have been more rational to live out his life to the end as it was shaped for him, to let this life ebb away from him?

He thought of the letter which he had lately written to Werner Kreutz :

“Yours for life and death, provided Lili survives.”

Every particle of masculine pride that dwelt in him stirred and gripped him. “I must reach the goal. I must hold out.” He spoke his thoughts half aloud, and several fellow-travellers regarded him inquiringly.

He had to laugh. . . . Not in vain was he a native of Copenhagen, where nothing is ever taken seriously.

“So,” said Andreas to himself, “let us write our obituary. It’s not a matter to be taken tragically.”

And then he began rapidly to compose the sort of notice that would be published, appraising him as artist.

“The painter Andreas Sparre is dead. He died in the train between Paris and Berlin. His

fellow-travellers thought he had fallen asleep in one of the corner seats of his compartment. The cause of death was probably a heart attack.

"A happy and harmonious artistic life here came to an abrupt close. He was a man in the prime of life. After searching for a long time and experimenting in various ways, he seemed to have found his style. His pictures, which mostly originated in France and Italy, were sometimes bright and bathed in colour, sometimes dark and somewhat sombre, but always charged with sentiment and natural feeling. Two subjects he preferred above all else : Paris, whose embankments, bridges and towers he succeeded, with no little mastery, in reproducing in their lightly veiled pearl-grey atmosphere, and landscapes under lowering skies, showing in vivid lights the trees and houses in the background. It was especially in pictures of the latter kind, these strong, very masculinely conceived storm pictures, that Andreas Sparre found an outlet for his talent.

"We, who were acquainted with his soft, often effeminate appearance, and his laughing, joyous tones in conversation, noted this with astonishment, and the thought frequently struck us that whatever masculine force resided in him found its outlet in these strong, somewhat wild and wilful pictures.

"He painted very quickly, and thus it happened that he found time to devote himself to many other things beside his art. His knowledge was really comprehensive. Very characteristic was an answer which we once heard from his own lips, in the Trianon, addressed by him to an older

colleague. The latter had expressed his annoyance at the fact that a young colleague was beginning a picture in what he thought was too systematic a way. 'You must pardon me if I don't share your view,' retorted Andreas Sparre, 'but I do believe that it is impossible to paint a leaf of a rose correctly unless one knows the last thing about the influence of Assyrian bas-relief upon the sculpture of the Greeks.'

"On another occasion he expressed himself in the following way: 'I cannot understand how lightly most of my older colleagues take their art—how easily satisfied they are with their performances. As for me, I calculate I should require a thousand years to become a decent painter.' Thus seriously did Andreas Sparre take his art, at any rate.

"The greater portion of his life he had spent far from his Danish home—in Italy, Holland, Germany, and France. He lived mostly in Paris.

"The reason why he turned his back in early manhood on Copenhagen, although his art was highly appreciated there from the beginning, was because Copenhagen and Denmark did not seem *to him to be the right soil for his wife's art. In Copenhagen he had frequently been obliged to hear how much his pictures were preferred to those of his wife. And that was perhaps the worst thing that could be said to him. In Paris, where the contrary was generally the case, he felt at home for this very reason. He felt his wife's successes as his own successes, for his dominant characteristic was chivalry towards his wife, as towards women generally.*

"For the rest, his was a complex, enigmatic

nature. Despite the inevitable influences to which every artist in Paris is exposed, he remained fundamentally a Northern painter, and his art, in its quintessence, had little affinity with Latin, but every affinity with Teutonic influences. His personal outlook was European. He maintained a constant intercourse with French philosophers and writers, with Polish violinists, with Russian architects, and German painters.

"In collaboration with a French friend he wrote a book about Northern sagas, which passed through many editions in Paris. Of this he was not a little proud. And he took pleasure in the fact that through this book he had been the means of opening the eyes of the Latin reading world to the Teutonic world of ideas, an undertaking which in the post-War period (the book appeared in the year 1924) deserves praise as the throwing of an intellectual bridge between the Latin and the Teutonic worlds.

"Without being himself a practised musician, he cherished a deep love of music.

"In recent years his health had not been particularly good. He had frequently complained of pains, but always in a restrained and smiling way, so that even the doctors whom he was eventually obliged to consult were misled as to his real condition or were unable to realize the serious state of his health.

"And now death has so abruptly—and to the deep sorrow of his many friends near and far—terminated this versatile artistic career, which to all of us who have known him must seem like an unfinished romance. . . ."

"Full stop," said Andreas to himself. "Full stop." And he thought that, in much the same language as he had just been using, someone else had secretly written down his career in a diary—Grete, his faithful life's companion, as she too thought that he would die suddenly. One night he had found her asleep over her diary. He was careful not to let Grete suspect that he knew of the existence of this diary.

The train had passed Aix long ago. Would they never reach Cologne? he moaned inwardly.

Andreas had not booked a sleeping-berth. He did not care for this modern travelling comfort. To be perched aloft with perfect strangers was repellent to his fastidiousness. An unconquerable aversion forbade him to undress in the presence of other men. He had often been chaffed on this account. Only Grete understood his repugnance.

At last, Cologne! All his fellow travellers left the compartment. "They have sleeping-berths," thought Andreas gleefully. He was left alone.

After a short time the train started again. Andreas lit a fresh cigarette. Would the pain leave him in peace until he reached his destination, Berlin? If he could only sleep just this one night! If he could only banish thought for just this one night!

He took off his coat and laid it under his head, so that he might lie higher, and wrapped himself in his cloak. Before he had felt too hot . . . now he began to shiver. He rose from his seat, drew down the curtains in front of the windows, and switched off the light. Then he laid down again.

The pains racked him afresh. He drew his cloak over his face.



J. PARIS,



Then he fell asleep, and slept for several hours.

"Hanover ! . . . Hanover !" the porters were shouting, And then again, a long way off : "Hanover !"

The sound of hammers was heard tapping the wheels, coming nearer and nearer. Doors were flung open and slammed.

A shrill whistle blew and slowly the train moved off again.

Andreas was half leaning, half lying on the seat in a drowsy state. Suddenly he jumped to his feet. The door of his carriage was flung open. The drawn curtains were pushed aside.

A lady was standing in front of the door. Her silhouette was sharply defined against the light in the corridor.

The darkness in his compartment seemed for a moment to intimidate her. But only for a moment. Then she threw a small trunk upon the rack and sank wearily into the nearest empty corner seat, next to the door leading to the corridor.

Andreas switched on the light again.

He suppressed his ill-humour at being thus suddenly jerked out of his solitude. "The train will not stop again until it reaches Berlin," he thought, "and so there is no hope of being alone again." Should he move into the adjoining compartment ? Perhaps it was empty. But he immediately rejected the idea. He could not hurt the lady's feelings by appearing discourteous.

He sat up straight in his seat, and observed his companion without her noticing it.

What struck him was the expression of her eyes. She did not seem to be seeing him at all ; she did



not seem to be aware that she was sharing the tiny compartment with a man.

He looked in front of him. He stared at his fingers. But his eyes were soon fixed on her again, and he noted with astonishment that she was weeping.

The tears were starting from her eyes. She must have seen that he was looking at her ; but in spite of this she did not make the least attempt to hide her weeping or dry her tears.

She was obviously quite young. Plaits of fair hair framed a smooth, narrow, girlish forehead. Her eyes, dimmed with tears, were bright blue and at other times could sparkle with gaiety. She had removed her gloves. He noticed a plain ring on a finger of her left hand. She was a bride, then.

Profound sympathy stirred in him.

"Mademoiselle . . ." he began.

She did not seem to hear him. Probably he had spoken too softly, or the roar of the train had drowned his words.

Then it occurred to him that he was now in Germany.

"Gnädiges Fräulein . . ." he repeated, almost embarrassed.

She raised her weeping eyes. "What an enchanting bride !" thought Andreas.

"I should like so much to help you," he said. "You seem to be in great trouble. . . ."

He could get no further. She covered her face with her hands and wept as if her heart would break. Then, between her sobs, she handed him a folded newspaper, which she had been hugging the whole time. Only then did Andreas notice it. He

took the paper, but did not know what to do with it. He rose from his seat and sat beside the weeping girl and stroked her hand. She became calmer.

It appeared that her husband, a well-known musician, had gone to Berlin two days before in order to give a concert in that city. This very evening he had been expected to return. On the way to the station to meet him, she had chanced to buy a newspaper, *the* newspaper which Andreas was now holding in his hand, and in it she had read . . .

She pointed to the place on the front page and wept again.

Andreas read :

The young pianist XX of Hanover, who gave a successful concert yesterday evening in the XX hall, met with an accident on the way to his hotel, his taxi-cab colliding with a tramcar. He is now lying in hospital with very serious injuries. His condition gives rise to the gravest anxiety.

Andreas was shocked when he read the report. He had offered his help to the unhappy bride. Now he felt like an idle chatterer.

And yet, little as he had ever been able to help himself, in the case of others he had frequently been able to alleviate pain by means of a mystic force which appeared to dwell in him. How often had not Grete and Elena assured him of this ?

The young lady's feverish hands were now lying in his. He clasped them tightly for a long time. At first she quivered like a captive bird. Then the quivering grew less and less. He did not utter a word; he merely stroked very softly the limp, girlish hands. She too was silent. He could hear her

gentle breathing, and then her breathing became more and more regular. Her head sank on his shoulder, and she fell asleep. Now her heart was beating softly against his hand, which he had been obliged to place around her to afford her support.

And he smiled happily at the thought that something of that hidden enigmatic force was still left in him to-day.

More than once he tried to move; but each time his companion trembled like a sick child, whimpering in slumber. He therefore remained sitting in a rigid position. And gradually the roar of the train rocked him lightly to sleep also.

It was not long before he awoke, and the thought of his position forced a smile to his lips.

Here he was now sitting, he, Andreas Sparre, of Copenhagen, whom life had drifted to Paris, and who was now being driven northward by a fantastic destiny, overwhelmed with his own grief and needing help and assistance if ever a person did, and chance had selected just him to give consolation to a perfect stranger, to help her over a dark hour of her existence—perhaps her darkest hour. And here was this little German lady, the wife of an unknown man, lying in his arms. And she and he, each of them, were journeying, guided by by some blind providence, towards their own fates . . . somewhere in Germany.

These were the thoughts that kept running through his mind.

And then a few secret tears splashed down his cheeks, and it suddenly dawned upon him why all this had so happened. This charming creature from Hanover, who was now slumbering

in his arms like a blissfully confiding child, had been sent him as the last woman towards whom he could act as a protective male—before parting for ever from woman, from the eternal-feminine.

So his thoughts assumed these vague shapes, while on the other side of the window a foggy morning was dawning, and the train was rushing through the sea of houses which constituted Berlin.

He realized that he must awaken his travelling companion.

With a shriek of anguish she started out of her sleep, and gazed at him in utter perplexity. "Oh, he can't be dead!" Her words again dissolved in tears.

"Child," he said, speaking in a soft and confident voice, "child, I do not know your name, and you do not know mine, but please believe me when I say that I know he is alive."

She seized both his hands and covered them with kisses.

"Yes, indeed," he assured her, "make your mind quite easy."

"Oh, I am quite at ease! How you have helped me! I shall never forget what you have done."

A few minutes later she was lost in the crowd of people on the platform. Andreas gazed after her for a long time. The newspaper which she had given him during the night was the only memento which he retained.

A few days later Andreas happened to read in a newspaper that the husband of his unknown travelling companion was on the road to recovery.

## V

**I**N the company of a porter Andreas walked the short distance from the station to the hotel.

"How devilish cold it is here in Berlin, although it is the first of March !" he confided in a tone of surprise to the man who was carrying his two trunks. "In Paris it is already spring."

"Yes, in Paris," replied the honest fellow, "in Paris." And this ended the conversation.

Andreas turned up his collar. His teeth were really chattering. He was exhausted after passing an almost sleepless night and plunging into the midst of a strange world. But the unexpected coldness of the temperature kept his senses fully alert.

Suddenly, before he reached the neighbouring hotel, the thought struck him : "These two trunks contain my very last articles of clothing, shirts, collars. . . . How absurd !"

A feeling of defiance welled up in him, as if the *man* were at bay, the man within him.

In the hotel, where the manager had been advised of his arrival, he was treated with exquisite courtesy. He immediately inquired whether Professor Kreutz, who was in the habit of staying in this hotel almost every week-end, had perchance already arrived. He was disappointed to learn that this was not so, nor had any letter been left for him with the porter.

A few minutes later he went to his room. He took a warm bath, and by the time he had breakfasted all his troubles were forgotten.

Elena's woman friend, the sender of the fateful telegram which had prompted his journey to Berlin, soon rang him up.

"Welcome to Berlin," her voice sounded over the telephone. Andreas immediately recognized the voice of Baroness Schildt, whom he had met in Paris on a number of occasions with Grete and their two friends.

"We have everything ready. And so that no time may be lost, some specialists whom Werner Kreutz has been consulting will be getting into touch with you, probably to-day or to-morrow."

Some minutes later, Professor Arns, a doctor whom he had never heard of before, made an appointment with him for twelve o'clock.

And scarcely had this visit been arranged than the telephone rang again. Niels Hvide, an old Copenhagen friend, a lawyer and a poet at the same time, who had been living in Berlin for years, called him up.

"Hullo, Andreas."

"How do you know that——"

"Grete sent me a long telegram yesterday, and early this morning an express letter from her followed. The letter has therefore been racing you. You must come and see us at once. Inger and I will keep the morning coffee hot until you arrive."

An address and directions were hastily written down. A few minutes afterwards Andreas was on his way, and half an hour later he was in his friend's house.

A splendid fellow, this Niels—a blond giant from North Jutland, where his family were old landed proprietors.

Inger, his wife, was the type of the modern cultivated woman. Henna-red hair contrasted piquantly with her large blue eyes. Both were globe-trotters. Grete and Andreas had often undertaken long journeys with them together. Intimate as they had all been with one another, however, Niels and his wife had hitherto been unaware of Andreas' secret.

He was received most cordially. They had breakfast and spoke about indifferent subjects as long as Inger was in the room. Then Niels blurted out :

"Grete has told me something which I can't quite understand in this letter which came early this morning. You can, of course, read it."

Andreas retorted. "No ; the letter is addressed to you."

On the walls of the room hung a few pictures, painted by Grete and by Andreas. Involuntarily Andreas looked up at them. The first picture, painted by Grete, was—Lili.

"Yes," said Niels delicately, "now I understand a good deal of what used to seem like a fantastic idea about you both—seeing you crop up so often as a female model in Grete's pictures."

A brief silence followed this remark.

"Well, old fellow," resumed Niels, "some hints which Grete let fall about you a year ago in Paris showed me then that your life appeared to be taking a strange turn. Whether the change that is now in store for you is a happy or a disastrous







one, you can be assured of this—that you have entrusted your fate here to the best and most conscientious hands. Everything now depends upon whether you will have the strength to go through with it. You seem tired. But”—and Niels laughed merrily—“it really is a most extraordinary thing for a man to be faced with the choice of whether he will survive in this world of multiplying sensations as Andreas, or”—and then he pointed to the picture—“as Lili.”

Andreas looked hard at his friend. “Faced with the choice, you say. . . . No, I do not think it is a question of that, but of something much more serious, of life or death, in fact ; for believe me, the man you are talking to is condemned to death. And now the question is, whether that *being* there”—and he pointed to the portrait—“can be summoned into existence and take up the battle of life.”

Niels now spoke very seriously. “Yes, and what seems to be the most important thing at the moment is that you should be perfectly clear in your own mind how this strange, fantastic change which you have been undergoing from childhood until now—that is, during a normal human life—has been proceeding ; in what gradual manner, therefore, Lili has been gaining the upper hand over Andreas.”

“That is so,” replied Andreas, looking at his watch ; “but now I must be off to my first arbiter of life and death, to Professor Arns. And when I have finished with him I must probably go further . . . through the whole round.”

“Agreed,” laughed Niels jovially ; “and when

you have finished your lesson you will come again to us. And now, neck or nothing !”

Professor Arns, the inventor of a new method of blood-testing, received Andreas in a very considerate manner. He put a series of questions which, although of a delicate nature, were answered by Andreas without the least hesitation.

During the long and elaborate examinations—(the main thing was to determine the vital condition of Lili in Andreas by an analysis of his blood)—Andreas exerted all his will-power to exclude thought. The doctor conducted him from the study into a comfortably furnished room. “If you would like to smoke, please do so,” he said. After chatting for a short time about unimportant things, Professor Arns intimated to his patient that he must now submit himself for a special examination by his friend Dr. Hardenfeld, the sexual psychologist. “My colleague Hardenfeld has had so much experience in the more ‘emotional’ sphere—whatever we may think of this from the scientific standpoint—that I, at any rate, cannot ignore his opinion in what may so specially affect your person. When they have dismissed you there, you will have to go to Dr. Karner, another colleague. He and I, in fact, have to determine the hormone content of your blood, while colleague Hardenfeld has to pronounce a purely psychological opinion upon you and the person in you whom you call Lili. In any case I shall be glad if you will call on me again to-morrow morning. The result of these various ‘tests’ to which we have to subject you

will then be forwarded to your protector, Professor Kreutz."

"Your protector." . . . These words made Andreas' heart beat faster, and when, shortly afterwards, he was sitting in a waiting-room of the spacious Institute for Psychiatry, he was obliged to keep repeating these two words to himself—otherwise all his courage would have oozed away "Why have I been sent here?" he wondered. "What have I to do here?" He felt intensely uncomfortable. In this large room a group of abnormal persons seemed to be holding a meeting—women who appeared to be dressed up as men, and men of whom one could scarcely believe that they were men. The manner in which they were conversing disgusted him ; their movements, their voices, the way in which they were attired, produced a feeling of nausea.

At length Dr. Hardenfeld appeared and ushered him into his consulting-room. By means of a thousand penetrating questions, this man explored the patient's emotional life for hours. Andreas had to submit to an inquisition of the most ruthless kind. The shame of shamelessness is something that actually exists, he thought, during these hours, and clung to this definition, which he had once found in some philosophical work, in an effort to banish the feeling he had of standing there as if in the pillory. His emotional life was undergoing an ordeal which resembled running the gauntlet.

And when this torture came at last to an end, the inquisitor dismissed him with the words : "I shall expect you to-morrow morning at the same time."

Then it was Dr. Karner's turn. Andreas had by now acquired a sort of routine in answering the questions put to him. This examination took the form of a conversation throughout. Before Andreas was aware of it, he found himself in the midst of a real "masculine conversation", its theme being the political relations between France and Germany. And thus, quite incidentally, the doctor introduced a long, fine syringe into Andreas' arm, in order to take a blood test.

Dr. Karner also dismissed him with the words : "And I will see you again in the morning."

Exhausted by his ordeal, Andreas at length made his way to Niels and Inger Hvide in the evening.

"No," he exclaimed, "don't ask me anything now. I am not fit to answer questions. Let us rather take a good walk through your Babylon on the Spree round the Kurfürstendamm. I must see men, healthy men."

Inger had a previous engagement for the evening ; but Niels accepted his friend's proposal with alacrity.

They proceeded first to a Russian restaurant, where they enjoyed a supper of many courses, washed down with several glasses of vodka. Then they sampled German, French, Hungarian, and Spanish wines in bars and cafés of the most various kind. To the surprise of them both, Andreas proved a good tippling comrade this evening.

"Your health, Andreas!" said Niels, who had again remarked his friend's astonishing drinking capacity. "You are really a strange fellow. This evening you are behaving just like a rake—and to-morrow you will perhaps be insisting that henceforth I must treat you like a lady. When I look at you

I can hardly believe that there is not something wonderful about it all. But perhaps from the very beginning not only have two souls dwelt within your breast in the sense of Goethe, but two beings, two whole beings. . . . I hardly know how to express myself."

Andreas regarded him calmly. "I know what you are trying to get at. It is difficult to make head or tail of this change, difficult for me, but much more difficult for others. And the strangest thing of all, believe me, is that each of the beings within me is healthy and perfectly normal in its emotional life."

"And it is just that which is perhaps the abnormal and incredible thing about your case," declared Neils. "I have known you for years, I mean"—and then he laughed slightly—"as Andreas, for you have been silent about Lili to us friends. And as a man you have always seemed to me unquestionably healthy. I have, indeed, seen with my own eyes that you attract women, and that is the clearest proof that you are a genuine fellow." He paused, and then placed his hand on Andreas' shoulder. "You won't take it amiss if I ask you a frank question?"

Andreas stared at him. "Niels, if you knew what kind of questions I have had to answer to-day you would not behave so solemnly about the matter."

"Well, then, Andreas, have you at any time been interested in your own kind? You know what I mean."

Andreas shook his head calmly. "My word on it, Niels; never in my life. And I can add that

those kind of creatures have never shown any interest in me."

"Good, Andreas ! That's just what I thought."

"I will honestly and plainly confess to you, Niels, that I have always been attracted to women. And to-day as much as ever. A most banal confession !"

Niels raised his glass. "And now we will drink to the future. Let come what may ! Go right through with it ! If you had lived in the time of the old Greeks, perhaps they would have made you a demi-god. In the Middle Ages they would have burnt you, for miracles were then forbidden. But to-day doctors are, at any rate, permitted to accomplish something like a miracle. Thus we will drink to the day that is coming."

They drank the toast.

Niels accompanied his friend to his hotel. When Andreas found himself alone in his room, his physical and bodily torments overwhelmed him, and he collapsed.

By the next morning Andreas had recovered his equilibrium, outwardly at least.

Punctual to the minute he called on Professor Arns.

"Since I saw you yesterday I have been talking to Professor Kreutz. We are both agreed that a young colleague here, a surgeon of repute, ought to treat you first. When that is over, there will no longer be any obstacle to your reception in the Professor's clinic. That means, it is not you who will be received there."

"Not I?"

"Kreutz runs a women's clinic. Your case"—the Professor then laughed a little—"is somewhat unusual, even for us doctors. This means, therefore, that when the surgeon here dismisses you, you will be no longer Andreas Sparre, but——"

"Lili!"

"Just so! Hardenfeld has told me that he too regards the masculine element in you as by far the least considerable part of your being, which, in his opinion from the emotional standpoint, reveals between eighty and one hundred per cent of feminine characteristics. The examination of your blood has yielded a similar result. I will, of course, be present at the operation which we shall perform on you here in Berlin. Before this happens we will take a few photographs of you, for scientific reasons. Dr. Hardenfeld is now expecting you. To-morrow morning, then, you will go into the surgeon's nursing-home." Saying which, Professor Arns gave Andreas the exact address of the nursing-home.



## VI

**L**ATE that evening Andreas was again sitting with Niels and Inger.

After the three of them had finished dinner, during which husband and wife had intentionally avoided putting questions to Andreas as to the outcome of the various medical examinations, Andreas lit a cigarette, rose to his feet, and extinguished all superfluous lights, leaving only a solitary electric candle, suspended in an alcove, to cast a feeble light.

He sat down in a convenient armchair, and without any introduction began in a free and easy style.

"Yesterday evening, Niels, I pondered very deeply over your words."

"Over my words?"

"Yes; as you said, the most important thing at the moment is for me to be perfectly clear in my own mind—I am using your own words—how this strange, fantastic change which I have been undergoing from my childhood onwards has been taking place——"

"And how Lili has gradually gained the upper hand over you," said Niels, finishing the sentence.

"Well, then. I *did* ponder over this last night; especially as it is by no means unlikely that the present night will be the last night of——"

"Nonsense!" interrupted Inger.



EINAR WEGENER (ANDREAS SPARRE), GERDA WEGENER (GRETE SPARRE), TWO FRENCH FRIENDS



"Let it pass, Inger," interposed Niels. "I know what Andreas means."

Andreas laughed. "However that may be, Inger, it is my farewell night. And in order that you may perfectly understand this, and supposing that you both have as much patience as I have, I propose relating in detail how all this has happened. . . . I have made a few notes, so as not to lose the thread of my story. Who knows what the morrow will bring—whether I shall be still I, or whether I, obliterated to a certain extent as Andreas, the person who is now sitting in front of you, will start losing all memory of myself, in order to make room for another person."

Niels rose to his feet, paced up and down a few times, and then remained standing in front of Andreas. He too had now become serious.

"I thought it would be something like that. And as you know me to be a level-headed person, who mostly takes things as he finds them—that is, without letting his feelings run away with him—incidentally I have not yet forgotten the shorthand of my student days—I should like to suggest, if I am not hurting your feelings, that you let me take down in shorthand the *curriculum vitae* which you are about to relate. . . ." He broke into a laugh in which Andreas joined and then Inger.

"An excellent opportunity," exclaimed Andreas, amused. "Your reporting will not affect me in any way whatever. On the contrary!"

"Then fire away!" With these words Niels settled himself in an armchair, and produced a pencil and notebook. Inger reclined on the sofa and smoked her cigarette.

"I will tell you the story of my life, like an accurate chronicler," began Andreas, "so let it commence with my parents, whom you have both met. If I should grow tedious now and then, or too introspective——"

"I will run my blue pencil through it afterwards, as your Tacitus." Niels completed the sentence.

"Father's ancestors came from Mallorca to Jutland. From him I have my dark eyes. He was not a man of bracing character, but rather effeminate, much concerned with himself and his own comfort. Mother, on the other hand, was a hale woman, with healthy nerves, a Nordic blonde type, perhaps even somewhat hard in her temperament, an efficient housewife and a good mother. She died before Father, quite suddenly. Father was inconsolable. Their marriage had survived many storms. After Mother's death he revered her like a saint.

"She had four children, three sons and one daughter ; I being the youngest.

"I was a very happy child. Everybody pampered me, even my brothers and sister. I was a great epicure, and could eat nothing but my favourite dishes. From my father I never heard a harsh word in all my life. Whenever a slap was necessary, it was administered by Mother. For the rest, she vied with Father in spoiling me, as all youngsters are doubtless spoiled. Mother loved to dress me up. I was never clad finely enough for her. Sometimes I was not allowed to romp about with my playmates on account of my 'best clothes', and this was the greatest distress I had to endure.

As a little chap I had long, fair locks, snow-white skin, and dark eyes, so that strangers often took me for a girl. In a kindergarten, where, as the only boy, I played with eleven girls, I was the cleverest of all the children in knitting and embroidery. As a five-year-old, at the annual prize-giving of our kindergarten I received my first mark of public distinction for fancy-work.

"As an eight-year-old my two brothers often bantered me on account of my 'girl's voice'. I took this very much to heart, and thereafter made great efforts to acquire a proper youthful bass.

"Looking back on things now, it seems as if my childish voice was my first dissimulation.

"In other respects my childhood was nothing but sunshine. With my brothers I played with tin soldiers, with my sister with dolls. No one saw anything strange in the fact that I was fond of pushing my sister's toy perambulator, as many brothers who have sisters do this.

"At nine years of age I went to the same grammar school as my brothers. None of us was a model pupil. My favourite subjects were French and Latin, but I was also one of the most assiduous users of the school library, which gave me a high place in our headmaster's opinion. Nevertheless, I was usually the last but one in the class. The old man himself taught us French. He spoke the language correctly, with an excellent accent. Once during the summer holidays he went to Paris, and afterwards he told us wrathfully that he did not think much of the Parisians, as they neither understood him nor he understood them, ending his anecdote with the words : 'And

now you know, boys, that I can speak French. He was a droll chap.

"Of a different stamp was my Latin teacher. He was a most enlightened man, who not only taught us Latin grammar, but took great pains to familiarize us with the intellectual atmosphere of antiquity and the art of the ancients. He it was who first opened my eyes to the flawless beauty of Greek sculpture. It was only a vague and remote comprehension. But I can remember as if it were yesterday, when bathing with boys of my own age I would often blush at seeing my own somewhat slim and delicate youthful body reflected in the water beside the sturdy and not particularly well-proportioned youthful bodies of the others. I was really built on much more delicate and flexible lines than were my comrades. Then I would think of the youthful figures of Praxiteles, about which the Latin master had been telling us a few days before. In the art-room we had also a few plaster casts.

"This reminds me of a little scene. At that time a number of girls were attending our school. One of them attended the same classes as I. Once—during the interval—she put her hat on my head for fun. 'Doesn't he look like a proper girl?' she cried, and my comrades laughed with me. Suddenly our Latin master stood in front of us. I was too frightened to take off the girl's hat in time, and before I knew what was happening I had received a sound thrashing. I was then in a perfect rage, and did not realize until many years later why my old teacher had then felt it his duty to punish me. We poor humans . . . what do we

know about ourselves . . . how much less about our neighbours ?

“For the rest I was an ordinary boy. I was in the thick of all fights. Just because I was more delicate than my companions I deliberately displayed special daring. Many bruises were the result of this ambition.

“Incidentally I went on long walks with my sister. And when I knew that no one was likely to see me—as in the wood close to the town—I pushed her doll’s pram, which always accompanied us.

“In adolescence my interest in art constantly increased. When I was seventeen I began to read art periodicals and to visit art exhibitions. My father, who, being an old merchant, thought little of an artist’s career for me, tried several times to divert my life into a ‘practical direction’. Thus he apprenticed me first to a merchant and then to a master painter, without achieving anything except to intensify still more my desire to follow an artistic career.

“At the same time, like every adolescent, I had my ‘flame’ ; indeed, to be honest, I must even speak of ‘flames’.

“When my father at length realized that it was hopeless to try to interest me in anything ‘practical’, I was sent at nineteen years of age to an art academy at Copenhagen. Here a number of good comrades took me under their wing and took care that I very quickly lost my provincial simplicity and embarrassment and that I also lost my innocence in a thoroughly brutal fashion. Then I met Grete.



"It was love at first sight.

"Grete had just come to the art academy. She too was from the provinces. We immediately became inseparable. We attended all the evening lectures together. The ordinary teaching in the academy was at that time so arranged as to divide the sexes.

"A friend had brought us together.

"When he learned one day that we were engaged, he became perfectly furious with jealousy, not really on account of Grete, but, and this I only learned many years later, on account of me. But even such a symptom as this is really nothing extraordinary. How many friends have not had similar experiences when a woman has come between them! A year after our first meeting Grete and I were married. We were still very young—I barely twenty, Grete two or three years younger. What did we know of life, of people? We were indescribably happy in each other's society.

"I recollect one evening in the first years of our marriage—we were then living in a studio which commanded a wide view over Copenhagen—Grete was reading to me a primitive fable out of antiquity. It ran somewhat like this: 'Hermes, the darling of the gods, had a son, and Aphrodite, the divine beauty, a daughter. The two children were perfect models of beauty. Yet they had never seen each other before when one day they confronted each other in the Wood of the Gods. The girl was immediately enamoured of the boy; but the boy fled from her. However fast she ran after him, he ran faster still. In despair the divine

maiden turned to Zeus and bewailed to him her love torment. "I love him, father, but he has fled from me. He will have nothing to do with me. Oh, father, grant that I become one with him." And Zeus heard the prayer of the divine child, and he raised his arm, and the next moment the shy son of Hermes stood before the Olympian, and Aphrodite's daughter shouted with glee, embraced the trembling youngster—and again Zeus raised his arm—both melted into each other. When Hermes and Aphrodite sought after their children, they found a blissfully smiling divine child. "It is my son!" cried Hermes. "No, it is my daughter!" cried Aphrodite. They were both right.

"'You know,' said Grete to me, 'I love you so much that I should like you and me to be *one* being.'

"About this time Grete painted the portrait of the then popular actress in Copenhagen, Anna Larsen. One day Anna was unable to attend the appointed sitting. On the telephone she asked Grete, who was somewhat vexed: 'Cannot Andreas pose as a model for the lower part of the picture? His legs and feet are as pretty as mine.'

"Grete laughed. Anna Larsen was aware that once, when Grete was painting a picture of a woman, I had been obliged to come to her assistance with my legs. But it had really only been a question of drapery. 'You really have very pretty woman's legs,' Grete had said to me jokingly.

"While Grete was talking to Anna Larsen on the telephone, I had been busy cleaning my palette. I was smoking a cigarette and scarcely

listened when Grete informed me of Anna Larsen's proposal. At first I declined rather shortly. Grete chaffed me, abused me, implored me, petted me, and a few minutes later I was standing in the studio in costume and high-heeled shoes. We both laughed as though it were a great joke. And to make the disguise complete, Grete fetched out a carnival wig from the depths of a trunk, a fair, very curly wig, and drew it over my head. Then she attacked me with rouge and powder, while I submitted patiently to everything.

"When all was ready we could scarcely believe our eyes. I turned round and stared at myself in a mirror again and again, trying to recognize myself. Was it really possible, I asked myself, that I could be so good-looking? Grete clapped her hands delightedly. 'The most perfect ladies' model,' she cried again and again. 'You look just as if you had never worn anything but women's clothes in your life.'

"And I cannot deny, strange though it may sound, that I enjoyed myself in this disguise. I liked the feel of soft women's clothing ; indeed, I seemed to take them as a matter of course. I felt at home in them from the first moment. Grete began to paint.

"Then a bell rang in the corridor, and a moment later Anna Larsen rustled into the studio. She had managed to find time.

"She looked at me, but did not recognize the strange lady in front of her. She only recognized her own clothes. Then she uttered a cry of delight and embraced me violently.

" 'I haven't seen anything so amusing for a long



LILI AND HER FRIEND CLAUDE, BEAUGENCY, FRANCE, 1928  
(BEFORE THE OPERATION)



time,' she declared, and applauded my appearance. She peeped at me from every angle. I had to turn about and assume every possible position. Finally she asserted that I was very much prettier as a girl than as a man. I wore ladies' clothes very much better than male costume. 'Yes,' she maintained—and I have never forgotten these words, 'you know, Andreas, you were certainly a girl in a former existence, or else Nature has made a mistake with you this time.'

"She spoke quite slowly, quite deliberately, and it was obvious that she was strangely stirred.

"Grete gave me a hint to take off the clothes, as Anna Larsen could now pose herself.

"I made a movement to retire; but Anna Larsen held me back. 'No,' she cried, 'I simply could not endure to meet Andreas again to-day. We won't even speak of him. Listen, and now I will christen you, my girlie. You shall receive a particularly lovely, musical name. For example, *Lili*. What do you say to *Lili*? Henceforth I will call you *Lili*. And we must celebrate this! What do you say, Grete?'

"And Grete merely nodded, looked now at Anna, now at the child about to be christened; and then the three of us kept up rejoicings until far into the night—*Lili's* christening night.

"So *Lili* came into existence, and the name stuck; nor was it merely a question of the name.

"With an extravagant joke, a genuine accident of the studio, if you like, it started, and for many years we played our game with *Lili*.

"A few weeks after *Lili's* christening an artists' ball was held. Grete suggested that *Lili* should go

in order to be introduced into the larger world, and she designed a pierrette's costume.

"It was a complete success. Lili was one of the most popular dancers of the evening. An officer paid her special attentions. Eventually he called her out for every dance, and towards midnight he became somewhat obtrusive. Then Lili tried to disclose her secret. It availed her nothing—the officer simply would not believe her! When she managed to escape, she fell out of the frying-pan into the fire. A fresh cavalier caught hold of her, and would not let her go. On the spot he requested permission to kiss her, at least, on the neck. When at length she escaped from his clutches, the pierrette costume bore some trace of the struggle.

"Another remarkable fact came to Lili's notice during this ball—the attitude of the female sex towards her. Several times she had regarded with a friendly smile such ladies as she found attractive. But most of them had returned her confident look with an icy stare. She was perplexed, and at last inquired of Grete whether she had behaved herself badly, whether she looked impossible. Grete said with a smile, 'Our stupid Lili is very young. She does not yet know the malice and mistrust of women towards other women.'

"It was the first time that Lili was conscious of possessing a separate personality. And out of this amusing incident came something like a presentiment. How often have my thoughts wandered back to that far-off evening!

"But this evening yielded another experience, which was no less characteristic.

"Grete and Lili were preparing to return home. In the search for her cloak Lili ran into the arms of a tall painter who belonged to the academy. He was one of my four studio comrades. For heaven's sake, what could I do to prevent the secret from being discovered? Lili behaved as if she had not seen him. He seized her, squeezed her, and pressed half a dozen kisses on her neck. This time *I* came to Lili's assistance. A few well-armed blows caught the insolent fellow right on the face. . . . Hauwitz was the man's name.

"When I entered the class in the academy the following day, I found the comrades in the thick of a discussion of the carnival night. Hauwitz was the most enthusiastic of them all. He recounted his experiences in the grand manner.

"'But where were you hiding yesterday?' he attacked me at once. The others, too, asked me why I had not been present, especially as Grete had been there.

"I explained that I had not felt well. Anyhow, I knew that the comrades enjoyed themselves very much, especially Hauwitz, who had courted a pierrette very ardently.

"How did I know that, threw in Hauwitz, flattered: a man could not move, it seemed, without giving rise to gossip; who, then, has been so indiscreet as to betray his little adventure?

"'I know you're a famous heart-breaker,' said I. 'Let's hear all about it.'

"At first Hauwitz refused chivalrously. 'I hope I'm a gentleman. Moreover, the pierrette was really a fabulous person.'

"He simpered and winked at me expectantly.



The others crowded round him. 'Fire away, Hauwitz,' they encouraged him.

"'No ; friend Sparre seems to know all about it. Ask him,' he replied meaningly.

"'But, my dear Hauwitz, please do not misunderstand me. I should be the last to give anyone away,' I retorted, inquiring at the same time : 'Was she really so pretty, then ?'

"'You can suppose as much as you like,' broke out Hauwitz. 'You cannot go too far in your suppositions. An unheard of thing !'

"Whereupon he relapsed into silence, which was more eloquent than the coarsest boasting.

"To my intimate friends I afterwards confessed who the pierrette was. Hauwitz was only initiated into the secret much later, after he had found further opportunity to pose as Casanova.

"This ball was followed by others, at which Lili became accustomed to her rôle with growing success. Grete titivated her each time, so that this strange creature who had suddenly emerged in Copenhagen artistic circles began to cause a stir. Lili gradually became indispensable to Grete. For, strange as all this may now sound, it was not *I* who dressed up as Lili, but both for me and for Grete Lili very soon became a perfectly independent person, in fact, a playmate for Grete, *her* own playmate and her toy at the same time.

"Lili and I became two beings. If Lili was not there, we spoke of her as of a third person. And when Lili was there—that is, when I was not there—I was spoken of between her and Grete as of a third person. And soon our most intimate

friends learned all this. But it was still a game for many years.

"In the depths of her soul Grete is utterly melancholy. And to banish such feeling she summoned her playmate Lili. Lili, was, in fact, carelessness and serenity personified. Gradually Lili became equally important to her mistress in the capacity of a model ; indeed—I can say it calmly now—Lili has been Grete's favourite model. Whether it was chance or not, Grete had more and more success with pictures for which Lili posed as model. And she began to see in Lili a kind of mascot, a talisman that brought luck. A large number of Grete's pictures and drawings originated at that time in our first studio in Copenhagen, in which Lili appears as model in a hundred different poses. Grete's artistic fame spread. But nobody knew who was concealed behind the model. Legends sprang up around it. Rumour also began to whisper, without, however, discovering the track of the secret.

"A well-known writer asserted that the model Lili was no creature of flesh and blood at all, but merely a female type, upon which Grete's imagination had fastened, and therefore an empty caprice.

"Only a few suspected the connection. But nobody knew anything definite about the mystery of Lili—with the exception of Anna Larsen, who, however, had been sworn to silence. She kept her word.

"One day Grete received an invitation from Paris to exhibit her 'Lili sketches'.

"And so the three of us were transplanted to Paris : Grete, I, and—Lili."

## VII

**B**our removal to Paris we already made several journeys abroad. Whenever we were able to spare sufficient money from the sale of our pictures—we were extremely frugal in our mode of living—we had travelled South, to study, to paint, and to become acquainted with the world. Lili had not been with us upon any of these trips. There were too many new things to see for Grete and I to find any time to devote to her. But as soon as we found ourselves again in our native studio, she reappeared—and then we had to acknowledge every time that we had really missed her.

“We spent almost a whole year in Italy without Lili. It was the most carefree year which I ever passed with Grete. The romance of the South was an indescribably splendid revelation to us two children of the North.

“How could we find time to . . . play? Grete was at that time serenity itself. In Italy’s wonderland she never felt oppressed. She needed no distraction. Hence Lili was not conjured up by her.

“And yet Lili was probably more than ever closely bound up with us both. Only it was no longer a pastime. About that time I began to undergo a change in myself, the nature of which I did

not then realize. I first became aware of it through my influence upon *others* . . . in Italy just at that time. In Florence an unfortunate person approached me. He was a wealthy foreigner. One day, after he had been dogging me for weeks, he spoke to me and suggested that I should take up my quarters in his villa, where I could pursue my studies as a painter to my heart's content. I declined politely, but very firmly. After that I saw him frequently. I was always with a lady, either with Grete or in the company of a strikingly beautiful Sicilian. A very little more and I should have been obliged to challenge this poor creature to a duel with pistols.

"In Rome I had a similar adventure. In that city an American millionaire wanted me to accompany him to Egypt. He pestered not only me, but also Grete. He sailed alone to Alexandria.

"Never before had I been placed in such delicate situations. Why this happened just then in Italy I only realized much later. When Professor Kreutz recently saw in Paris a number of photographs taken of me during recent years, including some taken on my first Italian trip, he pointed to these very pictures with the words : 'That was when Lili could be distinctly recognized in appearance for the first time.'

"In due course we returned to Paris.

"In the neighbourhood of the Ecole des Beaux Arts, on the left bank of the Seine, we stayed in one of the numerous small hotels. The landlord and his wife were not attractive, but their charming little daughter was like a ravishing kitten. Their like is only to be found in Paris.

"Two pleasant rooms, painted bright red and greyish colours, were assigned to us. One of them overlooked an old neglected garden, and had a mysterious alcove, with red-diapered curtains. The factotum of the hotel, Jean by name, lost no time in telling us that Oscar Wilde had spent his last days in these two rooms. He had died in the alcove with the red-diapered curtains. As Jean was telling us this, the tears ran down his ill-shorn cheeks. He had reason to regret Oscar Wilde's death. Many a twenty-franc piece had been given him by the unfortunate poet, with which to buy a few sous' worth of cigarettes, and he had never been asked for the change, he added, as a delicate hint to us.

"For Grete and I these two quiet rooms were altogether delightful. We often sat in front of the broad window overlooking the garden and read page after page of the works of the poet, whom I had admired for many years. Gradually Grete and I came to know "De Profundis" and "The Ballad of Reading Gaol" by heart. They were lovely evenings.

"Quite close to the hotel we found our favourite café, 'Chateau neuf du Pape', where art students mainly foregathered. A very modest little restaurant; but one could dine sumptuously there for one franc thirty. The wine was included in the price. Here we met our first Parisian friends.

"Shortly afterwards Grete was invited by the editor to contribute to a well-known Parisian illustrated periodical. He had, in fact, seen Grete's pictures and sketches at her first exhibition in Paris.



FRENCH LANDSCAPE BY EINAR WEGENER (ANDREAS SP/



"Grete was all on fire to begin her contributions immediately. But what should she offer? How quickly could she hunt up a suitable model?

"She looked at me inquiringly, hesitated a few moments, and then said: 'What do you think if Lili . . .'

"I confess that I was at first somewhat surprised. I too had forgotten Lili in the midst of the hubbub of Paris, just as I had during our first Italian trip. Here in Paris Grete had hitherto not required the company of Lili either for the purposes of her work or by way of distraction.

" 'Very good,' I said; 'but what shall she put on?'

"Lili's 'outfit' had been left behind in Copenhagen. Quite apart from the fact that Lili was considerably bigger than the very dainty Grete, the strictest separation of property was observed by us with regard to the wardrobe.

"The most necessary things for Lili were quickly procured. She was not a little proud of her first real Parisian costume.

"Thus she came to life again in the heart of Paris. The sketches for which she sat as model were successful. Grete was radiant. She obtained considerable prices for her work and we were able to rent a pleasant studio for ourselves. We settled in Paris, and built up our circle of friends and acquaintances.

"I too was now painting a great deal, partly in Paris, partly in Versailles, where we passed the warm summer months.

"A few happy and harmonious years were now in store for Grete and me. Lili only appeared in



our midst when Grete urgently needed her as a model. We earned good money, and Grete could hire 'strange models'.

"When we had put aside sufficient money for an educational tour, we set out again for Italy. Our objective was Capri. For years we had been longing to become acquainted with this paradise of sunshine.

"Scarcely had we arrived there than to our great delight we ran up against a painter from Florence whose acquaintance we had made during our first Italian journey. Nino we called him. Henceforth we were inseparable. Within a few days we had more acquaintances among the cosmopolitan artists with whom Capri was teeming than was always agreeable. Three or four times a day we met at the 'Morgano', and evening after evening we played chess and draughts. It went without saying that we mustered our full strength during bathing-hours on the tiny beach at Piccola Marina.

"Here we met one day a Scotsman, who always appeared in the company of a very pretty boy. When bathing the boy was transformed, to our astonishment, into a very nice girl.

"'Just what I expected,' declared a Venetian sculptor who belonged to our clique when this revelation burst upon us. 'I knew it from the start! A girl cannot impersonate a man, neither can a man impersonate a girl. Those who have eyes to see can detect the deception immediately. Some superficial thing always gives the game away.' The man's name was Favio.

"Grete threw me a saucy look. I understood

what it meant. At the hour of promenade the next afternoon Grete appeared in the company of a tall, slender young lady whom no one had hitherto seen in Capri. They strolled past the 'Morgano', where Grete had to return many curious greetings from friends and acquaintances. Suddenly Signora Favio, the sculptor's wife, spoke to the two ladies, inquired after me, and expressed the hope that I was not ill, as no one had seen me that day. Would Grete and I like to come to a social evening at her villa near Monte Tiberio?

"Grete regretted that Andreas had been obliged to go to Naples to attend to some important business, and he would not be back until early the following morning.

"Then she introduced her companion—  
'Mademoiselle Lili Cortaud . . . Signora Favio.'

"The signora had achieved her aim, and she hastened to invite Mademoiselle Lili with Madame Sparre to the social evening. We accepted with pleasure.

"The mystification succeeded beyond all expectation. Grete's French friend was welcomed with extreme cordiality by the whole company. A well-known Norwegian lady novelist pledged Mademoiselle Lili in a lively toast as 'the most perfect incarnation of French charm and Parisian elegance'. She did not stir from Lili's side. She invited Lili to visit her in Norway.

"Lili and Grete were both delighted, for the enchanting, perhaps I should say the piquant, thing about this new friendship was that this passionate Norwegian had hitherto shown a striking aversion to me.

"In the following days Grete's French friend gave a few more performances. In order to explain my continued absence, Grete told everybody who was curious on the point that her friend Lili and I did not get on at all well together. But Capri is a small place, and Lili was soon obliged to 'depart', in order to leave the field clear for me. Favio and all the others remained completely unsuspecting.

"When we returned to Paris, it frequently happened that after Grete had employed her as a model during the hours of daylight, Lili remained in bed during the whole evening. And if one or other of our intimate friends dropped in, she did not, as formerly, fly into another room, but stayed where she was and where the others were, and behaved charmingly.

"Gradually everybody came to like her. She was, as Grete was always obliged to acknowledge, the good fairy of all our little studio festivities.

"But everybody made a great distinction between Lili and me. Grete's female friends, who treated me with almost ceremonial propriety, embraced Lili and petted her. So did Grete's and my male friends.

"It was also strange that when Lili found herself among Grete's lady friends—who, like herself, were artists almost without exception—she felt the most feminine of them all. At first the friends laughed somewhat heartily at this fact, but gradually observed that Lili's feeling was genuine.

"And thus it came to pass that month after month Lili insisted with growing stubbornness on her rights, and gave place to me with increasing reluctance.

"In the Salon d'Automne, where we both

exhibited, Grete and I had met a French sculptor, Jean Tempête. This acquaintance was to lead to new experiences for Lili.

"He possessed a summer-house in a small town on the Loire. Assisted by a number of friends, he intended giving a theatrical performance upon the tiny stage of this small town for charitable purposes. Balgencie was the name of the place.

"He invited Grete and I to take part.

"It proved to be a delightful drive. The small town was a miniature Rothenburg.

"The 'theatre', which was to be occupied by us that same evening, looked from the outside like a tobacco shop with a café attached. The interior was usually let for cinematograph exhibitions and dances. As there was only one piece of scenery, which, moreover, was useless for our purpose, Grete was immediately appointed scene-painter. With lightning rapidity she sketched the stage scenery for the revue, which had been composed by Jean Tempête himself.

"At six o'clock in the evening everything was ready, and at nine o'clock the performance was to begin.

"At seven o'clock Tempête and I repaired to the station, in order to fetch the only member of our company who was still missing, a young lady artist who for some reason or other had not been able to travel with the others. She had to play a minor part, that of a typical Parisienne.

"The train arrived, but our Parisienne was not on board. It was the last train before the performance.

"Tempête raved. Small as the part was, without the player the piece would collapse.

" 'Then we must ask Grete to step into the breach,' I declared.

"Grete and I, who had only been invited to join the travelling party at the eleventh hour, did not belong to the company of players.

" 'An excellent idea!' exclaimed Tempête, and the moment he entered the so-called hotel where we had found accommodation, he pounced upon Grete. Completely exhausted by her scene-painting, she was lying on a rickety sofa.

" 'Out of the question,' she declared. 'With the best will in the world, I cannot do it.' Then she gave me a furtive look. 'But perhaps . . . Lili can?'

" 'Who is Lili?' asked Tempête. They all asked the same question.

" 'Don't worry about that. The main thing is that she comes. She can play the part without any trouble,' Grete assured the curious circle. She caught hold of Tempête, drew him aside, and gave him the necessary explanations. He shook with laughter, promised to hold his tongue, and then it was arranged that while Lili was being dressed he should initiate her into the part of the fast-dyed Parisienne in the seclusion of an hotel sitting-room.

"When evening came and the revue was launched in front of a crowded audience, not a soul in the hall suspected that Lili was not a genuine Parisienne. Moreover, the poetically minded chemist of Balgencie, who was a member of the charity committee, was so enthusiastic over

Lili that he sent a box of violet soap to the unknown beauty at her hotel.

"On this evening Lili became acquainted with her truest friend, Claude Lejeune, the tenor of the revue. He was the comic character of the evening. His mere appearance on the stage unloosed a storm of merriment. He was the only real artiste in this company of amateurs; that is to say, he was the only member of it who was not an amateur.

"Earlier in the day I had already noticed this young artiste, who with his droll, lightning wit might have bobbed up in any Montmartre bar. He had completely irregular features and colourless, somewhat deep-set eyes, the whole capped by a funny, pointed nose. At first glance he would probably appear ugly, but if one looked at him somewhat longer one would become conscious of a remarkable geniality and kindness which his whole personality radiated.

"If anything he had given me (Andreas) the cold shoulder, but his conduct towards Lili was of quite another character.

"It went without saying that, like the rest of his colleagues from Paris, he was soon 'in the picture'. As for the rest, discretion was observed.

"And the citizens, who had arranged a charity ball after the performance was over, of which we 'Parisians' were to form the centre of attraction, saw in Lili, who at the desire of all the company had remained in her stage costume, the typical Parisienne. Wherever she showed herself, she was treated with exquisite courtesy. She enjoyed herself immensely. She was sought after more than

any other dancer at the ball. When at length she found she could skip a dance, Claude Lejeune made his way towards her, bowed in his most amusing way, then, in order to show the most serious face in the world, screwed his monocle tighter into his eye, even blushed a little, and said almost solemnly : 'Mademoiselle, may I, as soon as you have somewhat recovered, solicit the honour of being your dancing partner a number of times in succession?' Lili looked at him somewhat surprised, and then nodded. And during this night they danced together many times. They were both about the same height. During the dancing they scarcely spoke a word to each other. They danced, completely surrendering themselves to the rhythm of the dance.

"When the last dance was over, Claude Lejeune bowed very low before Lili, blushed again, and said : 'Mademoiselle, may I hope you will honour the excursion we are making to-morrow with your presence ?'

"The other comrades also begged Lili, and she promised with a smile. Only the 'Parisians' took part in this excursion, otherwise Lili could hardly have been present. The day passed in perfect harmony, and it was arranged that everybody should meet again in Balgencie on the first of August, to spend their holidays together on the banks of the Loire. Lili was specially invited. She promised, on behalf of her brother Andreas. By this name Lili henceforth called—me.

That evening we returned to Paris.

"In August the 'Paris gang', as we were henceforward called, half admiringly, half apprehensively,



EINAR WEGENER (ANDREAS SPARRE),





conquered the little town, together with the delightful bathing-place. The thermometer registered 85 degrees in the shade. Frequently we were obliged to prolong our day into the night, which was all the more amusing as by ten o'clock in the evening the little town was shrouded in darkness, whether the moon was full or new.

"The so-called respectable society of Balgencie kept at a distance from us, with the exception of Monsieur René, the deputy mayor. The 'proper' civic chief had been obliged for a long time to shift the official business on to the broad shoulders of Monsieur René, owing to chronic stomach trouble. Monsieur René, as everybody in the town called him, was a bachelor. He took part in all our nocturnal excursions through the environs of his town, and it was he who during those August days submitted to the town councillors solemnly assembled in the town hall a proposal to organize, with the help of the 'Paris gang', another civic function for charitable purposes. The proposal was unanimously accepted. The next day solemn invitations were delivered to Jean Tempête, Grete, and me, as well as to a few other prominent members of our party, to devise a programme for the function. We resolved to organize a water-carnival, with flower-bedecked boats, on the Loire. Cupid's boat was to sail at the head of the procession of boats.

"Grete received instructions to prepare Cupid's boat.

"Monsieur René placed at our disposal an old broad-bottomed boat, as well as a boathouse, together with his wine cellar. When the rather

shabby boat was at length transformed into Cupid's festive gondola—the sail was a large red heart—and the launching had taken place, it transpired that, owing to its splendid, as well as very weighty, equipment, the craft was extremely difficult to steer. At Balgencie the Loire is very impetuous, and treacherous winds render a sail rather dangerous. It was therefore necessary for Cupid, as well as his attendant, to be strong swimmers. As no practised and daring swimmer could be discovered among the young ladies of the town, Jean Tempête very discreetly asked me if I could not assume Cupid's rôle, provided Claude Lejeune was assigned to me as squire. I was known to be an excellent swimmer. I promised on behalf of Lili and also of Claude, who had meanwhile become a good friend of ours.

“Thus on the banks of this ancient township, into which Joan of Arc had made her entry as a warrior in steel and iron centuries before, Lili was dressed up as the boy Cupid. . . . The carnival took place in glorious midsummer weather. The whole population stood on the shore and greeted Cupid with frantic cheers as he sailed in triumph upon the smooth glassy surface of the Loire. With his golden bow he shot a rain of arrows at the thousands of heads peeping through the trellis-work on the shore. And everybody believed that behind Cupid's mask was concealed the typical Parisienne from the revue of the last charity performance.

“Upon Claude had devolved the task, after the carnival was over, of conducting Lili to her hotel through a crowd wild with enthusiasm,

and when at length he brought her intact to her room, he looked at her long and then said, very quietly: 'However you dress up and whatever you want to make me believe, you are a genuine girl.'

"He stopped, startled at his own temerity. Lili stared at him.

" 'What is the matter, Claude ?' she asked.

" 'Nothing,' he said quietly, 'nothing at all. Or it is something ? But if I told Lili what I was just thinking and what I have been thinking all day, her brother Andreas would certainly be very angry with me.'

"Then he went, and when we saw each other again the following morning he looked at me shyly and kept out of my way. Lili had again disappeared.

"Year after year we all met again at Balgencie, where I gradually became accustomed to Lili's and my double experience. Lili took part in the festivities and excursions. I painted very industriously, swam and drank many glasses of wine with the notabilities of the town. I had many friends there. All the inhabitants of the town knew me and were delighted to recognize their houses and gardens and themselves in pictures of mine, which might subsequently hang in the autumn exhibitions of Paris. But nobody in the town suspected the identity of the slender Parisienne who now and then strolled with Grete and Claude through the alleys of the town and out into the country. These trips were among Lili's most delightful recollections. In the early dawn, before any bedroom window was opened, the three of them

would march out into the summer morning, and not until late in the evening, when the town had long since retired to rest, did they return, tired and happy. Claude was then Grete's and Lili's most delightful cavalier ; he was their brother and protector, and the friendship between them became ever more intimate and permanent, a friendship which stood every test.

"It went without saying that this 'triple alliance' continued in Paris. Every Sunday Claude made his appearance, when he was the guest of the studio for the whole of the day. And in accordance with an unwritten law, Lili always received him at the door in the corridor. If, however, she was, by a rare chance, absent, and I had to open the door to him, we greeted each other in a very comradely way ; he gave me his hand, asked about this and that ; but I could always remark his disappointment. In the studio he would then look at my pictures, although quite cursorily ; politics and similar topics were touched on in conversation and even the latest Parisian scandal. But it did not last long, at the most a quarter of an hour, and then Claude would look at me somewhat uncertainly. 'I have not yet said good day to Grete.' And then he would disappear into the little kitchen to join Grete.

"But if Lili opened the door to him on Sundays, he would at once go with her into the kitchen.

"In this connection I recall a little incident which happened just at that time.

"Claude had come to see us one weekday evening. Grete was not at home. I then suggested to him that we should visit some amusing dancing-bar

in the Quartier Latin together. We landed in the Gipsy Bar, where Claude ordered the speciality of the house, namely a coffin-nail. This cocktail was not unworthy of its very promising name. A frequent repetition of the enjoyment of this drink during a day or a night is calculated to curtail considerably our sojourn here below. Perhaps it was this drink which prompted us to try out a new dance which Claude had recently seen somewhere. Moreover, it was the first time that he had danced with *me*. We had scarcely taken the first step before the manager made a dash at us and requested us to stop dancing immediately. The gentlemen must excuse him; he knew us both very well, but in his establishment, unfortunately, they did not allow two gentlemen to dance together.

"We duly explained to the strict gentleman that all we were concerned about was trying out a new dance. He answered: 'Messieurs, I am sorry, but gentlemen are not allowed to dance together here. If I permitted it only for one occasion, and I know that in your case I am dealing with irreproachable gentlemen, my establishment would be over-run by persons of a certain type and its reputation would suffer injury.'

We sat down again with a laugh, ordered a harmless apéritif, and then went home.

The next evening Grete, Lili, and Claude visited the dancing-bar. Claude had, in the mean time, taught both ladies the same dance, and shortly after entering the bar Claude and Lili executed the extremely complicated dance without a hitch, amid the vigorous applause of the manager.

"Then he came over to Claude's table, made a polite bow to Grete, and especially to Lili, and said : 'I hope that your friend, whom I am sorry not to see with you to-day, has not avoided my establishment because he was irritated at the little incident of yesterday evening. Monsieur will understand.'"

"'Oh, we understand,' answered Claude, 'and I can assure you that my friend is not annoyed in the least.'"

"And the manager turned to Lili : 'May I offer Mademoiselle my heartiest congratulations ? Mademoiselle dances charmingly, charmingly.' And then, turning to Claude : 'Monsieur will admit that his partner of yesterday cannot be compared in the least with Mademoiselle.'"

"In connection with this amusing encounter I must tell you about another experience, which also happened about this time.

"Together with Claude and Grete, Lili was sometimes invited to a smart artists' club. The club evening usually consisted of a meal followed by a ball. One evening, Grete being tired, Lili went there alone with Claude, at his urgent request. A lady who was an intimate friend of ours and knew me as well as Lili—for the rest, nobody in the club suspected our double existence—made a point this evening of introducing Lili to a number of gentlemen, including her cousin, a nobleman who was no longer quite young. Hitherto Lili had declined to make fresh acquaintances on these club evenings, which were rare events for her. She was happy enough dancing with Claude, and did not need any other partners. Yet, before she could decline, her friend fetched her cousin : 'My cousin, le

Comte de Trempe—la Baronne Lili de Cortaud.' The gallant Count immediately challenged Lili to a fox-trot. This dance was followed by several more. Lili could not refuse. Claude nodded to her merrily. Thus it happened that Lili danced with her new cavalier until far into the night. When at length, completely exhausted, she said farewell to him 'for the present', with the most solemn face in the world he begged 'Madame la Baronne', who, as his cousin had whispered, was staying with Grete for a few days, to allow him to pay his respects to her the following day. What else could Lili do than make the best of a bad job?

"When Lili reached home, Grete was fast asleep.

"The next morning, while Lili was telling Grete about her conquest in the club, the bell rang in the corridor. The Count appeared; he made profuse apologies—Grete had opened the door—in case he was intruding, but he only wanted to inquire after the health of her guest, the Baroness Lili de Cortaud.

"Grete regretted sincerely that her visitor had already gone out, and showed the Count into the studio, where he immediately discovered portraits of Lili all over the place. He was beside himself with enthusiasm. Might he wait until the Baroness returned? Grete assured him that this would be a useless undertaking, as her visitor, who was also her sister-in-law, had been invited to dinner with friends.

" 'Oh,' the Count then exclaimed, 'so your husband—Monsieur Sparre—is brother to the Baroness.'



"In her distress Grete was obliged to admit this fact.

" 'When may I perhaps have the pleasure of calling on Monsieur Sparre ?' asked the Count, almost flurried.

"Grete promised to let him know soon through his cousin.

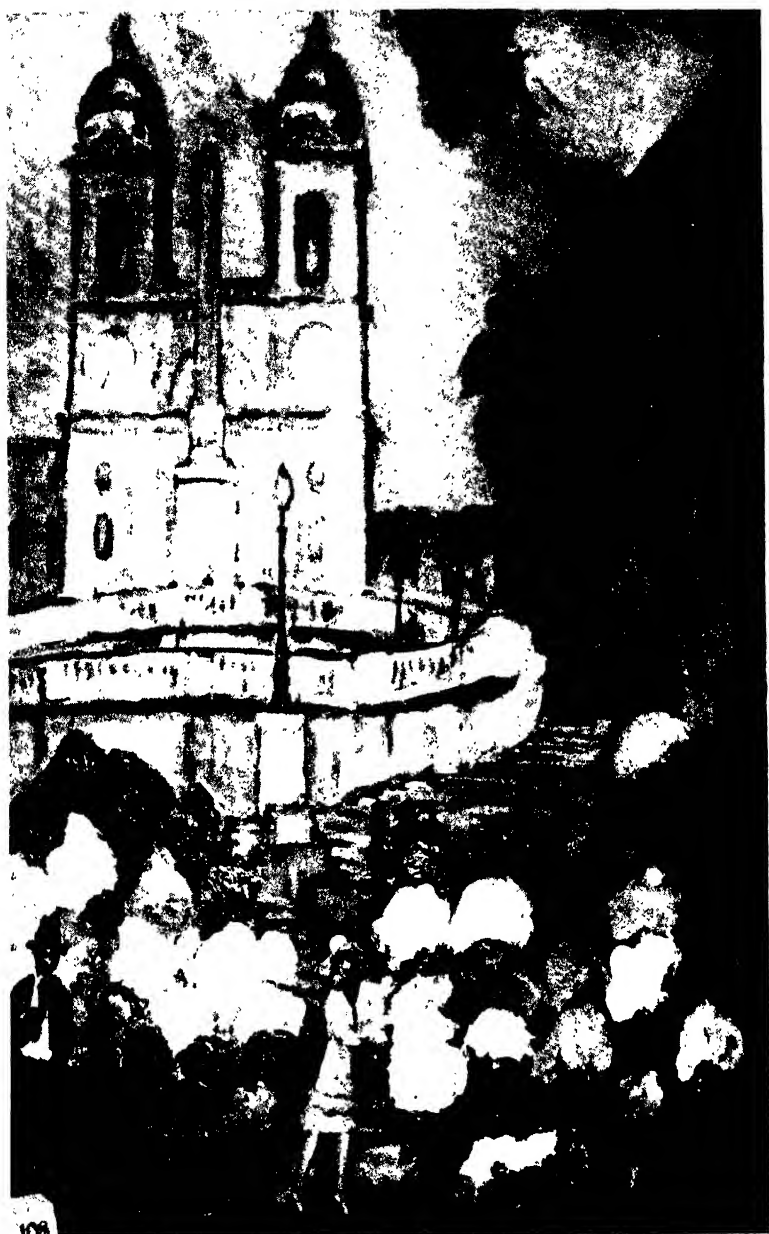
"The following day—we were taking tea in our studio with a few friends and were just discussing Lili's involuntary experience—the corridor bell rang again. The Count !

" 'I am sincerely delighted,' he began at once in his ceremonious way, 'to pay you a visit' (I could scarcely find time to usher him in). 'As I have already told Madame Sparre, the day before yesterday I made the acquaintance of your sister, the charming Baroness, and I am most anxious to see her again.'

"Of course it was now very difficult to keep up the pose, but we succeeded in doing so, and I replied : 'My sister will certainly be sorry to have missed the pleasure of shaking hands with you again, monsieur.'

"Grete and our visitors had great difficulty in strangling an outburst of Homeric laughter. I had to throw them a warning look. Without thinking, I continued : 'Unfortunately, we are seeing very little of our sister these days, invited everywhere . . . very much sought after . . . scarcely home before midnight.'

" 'Yes, I quite understand that,' said the Count looking at me searchingly. My heart felt like an anvil trembling under the strokes of a hammer. He went on, speaking slowly and blinking through



EINAR WEGENER'S (ANDREAS SPARRE) LAST PICTURE, ROME, 1929



his monocle at every word : 'It is very strange that you are brother and sister, for Madame de Cortaud does not resemble you in the least, my dear sir.'

"I agreed emphatically, and gave Grete an imploring look to keep a straight face. I had just finished a lengthy and prolix assurance that my sister and I did not resemble each other in the least, when the Count addressed to me an inquiry as to whether my sister was, as his cousin intimated to him, not engaged, was really free.

"Foolishly enough I did not contest this point.

"Whereupon he made an exemplary bow and, without beating about the bush, declared : 'Then, monsieur, I have the honour of offering the Baroness my hand.'

"I thanked him in the name of my sister and promised to inform her of his flattering offer. He then withdrew, amidst the exchange of numerous compliments.

"A moment later our studio was rocking with the roaring laughter of Grete and our visitors.

"I did not join in. Lili's experience at the ball was taking her out of her depth. I had to think of a way out.

" 'Quite simple,' cried Grete, whose laughter had brought tears into her eyes. 'I will tell the cousin to inform the Count that his lady-love has been suddenly obliged to leave for Copenhagen for very urgent family reasons. For the present a return to Paris is out of the question.'

"And so it happened. A few postcards which we caused to be posted to the Count by a friend in Copenhagen, who had to forge Lili's 'handwriting',

gradually convinced him of the 'hopelessness' of his wooing.

"He never learnt who Lili was.

"Even stranger was something that happened at the house of my sister and my brother-in-law in Copenhagen, where we were staying some months later on a visit.

"My little niece had seen pictures of Lili, and wanted to see this remarkable person for once 'in the life'. So it was arranged that she should be present one Sunday afternoon, which my parents were also to spend with my relatives. My parents had not seen Grete and me for a number of years. Consequently father and mother were disappointed to learn on their arrival that I was not expected until later, as I had a very important call to make first. Suddenly the bell rang in the hall. The girl announced that a French lady was in the passage and wanted to speak to Madame Grete Sparre. The lady was brought in; Grete welcomed her in the most cordial manner. It was a friend from Paris—unfortunately she only spoke French. And . . . Father immediately began a conversation in French! Mother, who made him translate everything to her, was enormously proud of him!

"In the course of the conversation Mother suddenly warned Father that he should not keep so close to the window with the lady from Paris. It was the middle of winter. 'Don't forget,' she said to Father, looking thoughtfully at the lady, 'the lady comes from a much milder climate and is so thinly clad. Please tell her to sit near the stove.

hen tea was served. And Father and Mother plied

the foreign visitor with requests for the latest news from Paris.

“For a whole hour the ‘Parisienne’ kept up the deception in front of Father and Mother. When she suddenly disclosed her identity, they both covered their faces with their hands. They could no longer trust their own eyes.

“‘No, no!’ repeated Mother, after a long interval. ‘That Andreas and Mademoiselle Lili from Paris are one and the same person I cannot believe.’

## VIII

“SO Lili and I continued to live our double life, and no one, neither the ‘initiated’ nor myself, saw in this anything else than a pleasant kind of distraction and entertainment, a kind of artists’ caprice, neither more nor less. We were as little perturbed at the obviously growing distinction, of an emotional kind, which increasingly manifested itself between the mystical girl and myself; nor did anyone take any serious notice of the delicate changes which gradually became perceptible in my physical form.

“But something had been silently preparing in *me*.

“One evening I said suddenly to Grete :

“ ‘Really I cannot imagine what existence would be like if Lili should one day vanish for ever, or if she should no longer look young and beautiful. Then she would no longer have any justification for living at all.’

“Grete at first looked at me astonished. Then she nodded and said in her calm, thoughtful way : ‘It is strange that you have mentioned something which has been on my mind a good deal lately. In recent months I have felt prickings of conscience because I was, to a certain extent, the cause of creating Lili, of enticing her out of you, and thus becoming responsible for a disharmony in you which

reveals itself most distinctly on those days when Lili does not appear.'

"I was thunderstruck at Grete's words. It was as if she had held up a mirror in front of me.

" 'It often happens,' she continued excitedly, 'that when she poses for me as a model a strange feeling comes over me that it is *she* whom I am creating and forming rather than the girl whom I am representing on my canvas. Sometimes it seems to me that here is something which is stronger than we are, something which makes us powerless and will thrust us aside, as if, indeed, it wanted to be revenged on us for having played with it.'

Grete broke off. Tears stood in her eyes. 'We have come to a steep part of the road, and I don't know where we shall find foothold,' she cried. I tried to calm her; but I scarcely succeeded, at least, not at once. I spoke and she listened to me. 'What you say is all so terribly true. And the most dangerous thing of all is that I feel it is Lili, just Lili, who forms the bond between us which has lasted all these years. I do not believe I could survive her.'

"Grete interrupted me to say that she had very often thought exactly the same, as Lili embodied our common youth and joy in life. She sobbed: 'Sometimes I wonder what life would be without her.'

"We stared at each other, deeply moved by this mutual confession, which had been provoked by many, many weeks of secret brooding.

" 'At any rate, I cannot imagine,' Grete went on, 'what it would be like for us without Lili.'



We must not lose her. If she should suddenly vanish, it would seem like a murder.'

"'The more so as I cannot help feeling that she is on the verge of becoming more vigorous than I am,' I said uneasily.

"Perhaps this conversation had the effect of plunging me into a momentary fit of despondency; but in other respects my health had been excellent during all these years. In spite of the fact that I had never looked very robust, although I was equal to every physical exertion, I had never really been ill. Just recently I had frequently felt indisposed, my chief sensation being one of utter weariness. Also, I had not stood too well the very cold rainy weather which Paris had latterly experienced year after year. I would cough from late autumn until spring almost without intermission. No doubt that is how I came to have gloomy thoughts. One cannot be young for ever, I would reflect. And then I would think of Lili. She shared her body with me. She was a woman. To remain young meant more for her than for me.

"My outlook became more and more melancholy. By nature I had always been a gay person, especially as long as I lived in Paris. But all this was now over. There were days, weeks, and months when I felt utterly impotent. The power to work went out of me. Everybody who had known me for years knew that I had been an industrious person. I could not understand myself.

"At intervals there would be a return of more lucid periods, whenever I could live in the country far from Paris and collect fresh subjects, especially in Balgencie. But they did not last long. I grew

more and more tired, more and more languid. I did not know what to do with myself. It was an unbearable condition to be in.

"Grete began to be uneasy. She persuaded me to see a doctor, and to please her I did so. The doctor found nothing specific the matter and prescribed a nerve tonic. It did no good. A new doctor was consulted, with a similar result, and so on.

"But when Lili appeared, everything went well, and life was fair once more. Every trace of ill-humour vanished.

"Consequently she now came as often as possible. In the meantime she had built up her own circle of friends and acquaintances, and she had her own memories and habits, which had nothing whatever to do with me. Often she would stay for several days in succession, and then she would sit contented with Grete, or even sit quite alone by herself, sewing or embroidering, and smiling to herself, happy in this feminine occupation. Nobody understood this mystery, neither Grete nor Elena. They all regarded this enigmatic being Lili, who built up her own world around her, with head-shakings and astonishment. But they let Lili alone, and she was happy.

"Something that happened just at this time was to inaugurate, more quickly than was anticipated, the last period of this incessant and ruthless inner struggle between Lili and myself. And for a long time it looked as if neither of us would survive this contest.

"About two years ago my old friend Iven Persen of the Theatre Royal, Copenhagen, gave

a number of performances among us in Paris. As his wife, the well-known dancer Ebba Persen, accompanied him, a ballet had, of course, to be arranged for one of the evenings. The ballet corps was not large, and it was short of one dancer. Thereupon Iven, who knew that I was not a bad dancer, asked whether I would care to take part. Without hesitation I replied in the affirmative.

"At the ballet rehearsals, which lasted a very long time, I probably over-exerted myself. At any rate, I was then attacked for the first time by strange hæmorrhages. I bled mostly at the nose, but in so unusual a way that Grete became anxious, and implored me to abandon my dancer's part; but I was very unwilling to do this, as I did not want to leave my old friend in the lurch. I saw the business through, although these hæmorrhages came on after the first night and after each of the numerous repetitions. And the most amazing thing of all was that every time I was seized with a fit of utterly strange convulsive sobbing. When the attack was over, however, I felt as if liberated, just as if something torpid in me had been dissolved; as if something new, something never before felt, was stirring. My whole being seemed as if transformed, as if a dam had suddenly burst.

"Never had music made so disturbing, so shattering an impression on me as on that evening. An achingly sweet and yet elevating sensation, which gripped all my senses, so the music wrought on me, moving me to tears, and the tears became convulsive sobs.

"A complete revolution in my character began on this evening. Formerly my intercourse with



EINAR WEGENER (ANDREAS SPARRE) IMPERSONATING LILI  
PARIS, JANUARY 1930



people had been rather imperious and condescending. From the first rehearsal I had been tormented by a feeling of failure. I was utterly astonished at myself. I no longer recognized myself. A strong impulse to resign myself, to obey, to submit myself unconditionally to another will, had seized hold of me. This impulse seemed to dominate me. Iven, my old friend and boon companion, acted the chief rôle of the evening, apart from Ebba. Only a year before the three of us had been very merry together in Copenhagen. It had never before occurred to me to play second fiddle to him, to recognize him as the leading spirit ! But on this evening, from the time of the first rehearsal, I submitted to him slavishly. Not a word of contradiction on my part did he encounter. And not only that, but I blushed like a boy when he requested me to do this or that step differently, to bow somewhat more or less at some figure or the other, and the like. And if he as much as touched me, I felt so confused that I did not know where to look.

"In all these psychic disturbances which I then experienced, nothing of an erotic nature played the slightest part. In this respect Iven and I had thoroughly sound natures. What it therefore meant I could not discover. It simply *was* so. And it was not *I* who first observed this change to humility, as Grete called it, but Grete herself. She teased me about it laughingly. But behind her smile was concealed an unbounded astonishment.

"For the general rehearsal I wore my dancing-costume for the first time, close-fitting tights, a bolero, and a wig of short curls. After the general rehearsal was over, when I was standing in a dirty,

ill-lighted corridor of the theatre, which was to take the place of the non-existent dressing-rooms, and while I was in the act of washing off powder and paint, a number of lasquenets, who likewise belonged to the ballet, passed behind me, clinking their weapons. One of them gave me a light slap.

" 'It suits you admirably to play a part in trousers, mademoiselle,' grinned the fellow.

"When I turned round with an energetic protest, the fellow slipped away, exclaiming: 'There is far too much bluff these days, *ma petite demoiselle*.'

"A few minutes later I had to go on the stage. When Iven perceived me, he burst out laughing, and cried: 'No, children, this won't do. Now we have too many ladies!'

"For a moment I did not understand the allusion. Then I turned round perplexed, all eyes upon me and everybody grinning. Red as a turkey-cock I rushed out, ran into the arms of a dresser, clutched him, and begged him 'at the producer's request to dress me rather more like a man'.

He endeavoured to do so with the assistance of a colleague, and indeed amid the giggles of both worthies. And I pulled myself together and behaved as if all this left me utterly unmoved.

"The evening before the première I met in the wings an actor of striking muscular development, who had to dance in the ballet in the same costume as I was wearing. When he saw me, he inspected me from top to toe, and then blurted out angrily: 'Good God, man, you look impossible like that!'

"I was speechless and felt as if I should like to sink into the earth. Had such a thing previously

been said to me by a man, I would have knocked him down.

"When I afterwards related everything to Grete, she confessed that she too had been struck by the strange alteration in the contours of my body. In my dancing-costume I had looked like a woman impersonating a man.

"In the time which followed, my nervous condition assumed a feverish character. Henceforth at almost regular intervals these mysterious fits of depression, accompanied by severe hæmorrhages and violent pains, set in. And then, in addition, there were these disconcerting fits of sobbing. At first I thought that I had displaced some internal organ during the ballet performances, and Grete too thought this. Consequently, we went to a doctor, who was really a heart specialist and not competent to deal with my alleged illness. But he had known me for years. Of Lili, on the other hand, he knew nothing. Only our most intimate friends had been initiated, among whom the doctor was not numbered. Hence I did not broach the subject of my double life during this visit, although I myself had begun to suspect a connection between this and my physical condition.

"As, after making a thorough examination, he found nothing which would explain the remarkable phenomena which had recently manifested themselves, he took me to a specialist, whom I had known slightly at Versailles. This doctor then examined my body with great particularity and growing astonishment, and eventually thought he was able to detect strange irregularities in my inside. For the rest, he declared that the only thing to be



done was to wait, especially as my whole constitution was very healthy and unimpaired ; such a body as mine could stand a good deal.

"Although this doctor had not said anything definite, this conversation gave me confidence and an almost mystical hope.

"By this time I was perfectly clear in my own mind that something of a most unusual character must be happening inside me. I had inferred this more from the doctor's expression than from anything he had said.

"And then, like so many sick persons who do not know what is really the matter with them, I began to procure all kinds of scientific books dealing with sexual problems. Within a short time I acquired an expert knowledge in this department, and knew many things of which the layman hardly dreams. But gradually it became clear to me that nothing which related to normal men and women could throw any light on my mysterious case.

"So it came about that I formed an independent opinion, to the effect that I was both man and woman in *one* body, and that the woman in this body was in process of gaining the upper hand. Upon this assumption I explained the disturbances, both physical and psychic, from which I was suffering to an increasing extent.

"All this I confided to Grete. And when, encouraged by her, I submitted my theory to various doctors in Paris and Versailles, they greeted it not merely with head-shakings, but even with disdain. The most polite among them treated me indulgently for every possible illness, while others regarded me as an hysterical subject, or simply as a lunatic.

"It was a terrible time. My health was on the downgrade, and soon I was unable to get any sleep. Grete was the only person who believed with me firmly in my theory. I owed it to her that I did not lose faith that one day I should find salvation.

"Exactly a year ago we journeyed southward once more, to Italy. Grete thought that a change of air just at this time, when Paris was having very rainy weather, would do me good. The French winter had been unusually cold. The whole of March had been spoiled by rainy weather. Beyond the Alps we found the world in blossom.

"We travelled to Rome, where we had arranged to meet an Italian officer whom we had met years before in Florence. He had just returned home on furlough from the East after a long period of colonial service. He was waiting for us at the railway station and escorted us to our hotel, and then we were to dine somewhere in the town. I was utterly exhausted after the long railway journey and was suffering indescribable agony ; but I did not want to spoil the day for Grete and our friend. I therefore went with them.

"We entered Facciano's and found a table. Through the open door the soft evening breezes streamed in from the beautiful Piazza Colonna, where we could see the shimmering white columns in front of the rusty-red façade of the Palazzo Chigi and the colonnade of Biffi, which re-echoed to the shrill cries of newspaper sellers, and thus saved one the expense of buying a journal. The orchestra played divinely. I shall never forget that evening.

"Grete sat opposite me.

"It suddenly flashed upon me that she was looking as if she were hardly twenty-five years old. Every trace of fatigue had been charmed away from her features. And beside her sat our friend Ridolfo Feruzzi, who was beaming on her. When we had made his acquaintance years ago, it did not seem fated to become an enduring friendship. At that time he had been a half-baked lieutenant. *Il bello tenente Feruzzi*, he was then called—it had been during our first Italian trip. When we parted at that time it had seemed to be for ever, until his letter from the remote colony had reached us in Paris. Most of its contents had been addressed to Grete.

"A feeling of deep melancholy stole over me. I found myself thinking of that time and of the years between, and, to some extent, of myself. What had I become?

"I pulled myself together. A thousand questions were asked, and as many were answered. 'Do you remember the So and Soss? And Mrs. X? Do you remember that evening at Lapi . . . that afternoon in the Casino . . . and the evening which followed in the cinema in the Piazza Vittorio Emmanuele?' I saw it all as if it had been yesterday, and there was I sitting with Grete and Ridolfo Feruzzi and laughing with them, and sometimes sharing a joke with them. They looked young, just as they did then so many years ago. But I joined in the laughter, although my laugh was forced and mechanical. My old zest in life had vanished. I had become another—a despondent person.

"There in Rome, a year ago now, I realized

quite definitely that it was all up with me, that I was at the end of my tether, irrevocably at the end. I felt and knew this as something unalterable.

"Grete and I had rented a studio with a wide balcony in the neighbourhood of the Piazza di Spagna. Every day I was ill, every day. And all the time the roses and the orange trees were blooming in front of our studio window.

"Now and then Lili appeared; but she had lost all her gaiety. She wept every time. She realized how beautiful life could be.

"Sometimes Grete would weep as well. Otherwise, she was perfectly well, even in Rome. She tried to paint; but nothing would come of her efforts. When I lay awake at night beside her, I observed that she too was lying with wide-open eyes. Our evenings we passed with Feruzzi. His character, too, underwent a gradual change. A fitful melancholy weighed upon him, even when he tried to appear cheerful. He confessed that when all was said and done his life had been a failure. He could understand men who had reached this conclusion turning to the cloister as their last refuge. Undoubtedly there were such men, even in the twentieth century. I perceived that his words were seriously meant.

"My thoughts wandered to Grete. Had she not also missed her life's purpose? Had she not sacrificed herself so that I should not live alone—because she felt that I had become a sick man—because she knew that she was the only person who could understand me? I knew that no earthly power could induce her to leave me—to-day less than ever. She was still young now. She still had

time to catch up with many of the opportunities she had missed for my sake. For me life had no longer any attraction. I know this is a shallow thing to say, for others, but for me it said and comprised everything. Why should I drag out a miserable existence any longer? No doctor could discover what was the matter with me, nobody could help me. To go on living, ill and old before my time . . . the idea was too horrible to contemplate. I thought all this out without any feeling of self-commiseration. And thus the idea presented itself quite naturally: better dead. Then Grete would be free. Then life would have still many rich years in store for her. That evening in Rome I took a resolution. It still holds good. Only one thing can alter it.

"It was then May. I gave myself a year's reprieve. If in the course of this year I should not find a doctor who could help me—who would try to save Lili—to separate her from me—I know how difficult it is for others to understand these words, to separate Lili from me—but how else shall I express the idea? Well, if I could not by the following May find this helper, then I would take a silent farewell from this existence, even if the other being who was obliged to share this existence with me in one body must also share my fate. I even appointed the day. It was to be the first of May. And I determined to carry out my design as discreetly as was possible to both of us—Lili and I—in order to spare Grete.

"Grete. . . . How to spare her? That was the hardest thing of all. I knew only too well how Grete would take a forcible termination of my life.





But despite all my consideration and solicitude for the best and truest friend of my life, I realized that there was no other way out. It would, however, be a release for us both, and certainly the only one that was possible.

"Once I had taken this decision I felt relieved. Now I knew that there would be an end of this torture within a measurable period of time.

"My health worsened from day to day. And the moment came when Grete perceived that I could not remain in Rome any longer, that a return to Paris, where we knew some trustworthy doctors, was urgently necessary.

"Unutterably depressed, we left Rome—and Ridolfo Feruzzi—one sunny spring morning much earlier than we had planned.

"In Paris, in our native environment, my condition apparently improved. Again we visited a few specialists, but always with a negative result. Eventually a radiologist took me in hand. The treatment almost cost me my life, and I was nearly relieved of the necessity of despatching myself on the appointed first of May.

"As the Parisian summer was too warm, we withdrew to Versailles, in the neighbourhood of the Park. Our life resumed its normal course. Neither Grete nor I were fond of making much fuss about our weal and woe, our joys and sorrows. Work is the best doctor, I said to myself. And as often as my condition permitted, I went into the Park with my paintbox and easel, just as I did in former years. And Lili came as often as she liked, to distract Grete and herself.

"The only person who had a fairly clear



perception of my condition was Claude Lejeune. At that period he was a comforter to us both. Without the need of many words, he divined what was concealed behind the apparent calm which Grete and I—and Lili—showed him on all his visits. When he came on Sunday, the old gaiety reigned once more among us.

“If we had not had Claude Lejeune at that time . . .

“He, like Grete, had long realized that the only thing that was still vital within me was Lili. This they believed firmly. And hence they both encouraged Lili to come as often as she liked.

“Claude Lejeune often took long walks with her through the Park of Versailles, forging plans for the future.

“On one such evening, when the setting sun had turned to molten gold all the windows of the palace and the smooth surface of the water in the pond, they were strolling arm in arm along the terrace. Suddenly they heard a lady say to her companion in passing : ‘Look ! Two happy people !’

“Most of our friends and acquaintances understood my condition much better than all the doctors whom we had consulted. Of course, their sympathy was limited to words. Nevertheless, their words often gave me moral support. They saw in me an overweighted man, whose sufferings were a real martyrdom, and not, as the French doctors declared over and over again, imagination and hysteria.

“One day I met an elderly French painter in Trianon. We had known each other for years. but had not seen each other for a long time. He

inquired sympathetically after my health. I answered evasively, without betraying the least hint of the real state of the case.

"To my astonishment he made answer in my place.

"I have been observing you for some time, without your having noticed it, here in the Park, when you are painting. I have been struck with the complete change that has come over you during recent years. Formerly you gave one the fresh, sharp impression of a healthy man. Now, if you will pardon my saying so, the effect you have on me is for all the world like that of a girl impersonating a man. You are ill. You are even very ill. You are undergoing a transformation. It is a fantastic idea ; but what had never been before may become actuality to-morrow. We have known of cases of inversion for a long time, and doctors can deal with them. Why shouldn't you also be helped. It is to be hoped you will find a courageous and imaginative doctor. Everything depends on this. Of course, you will wonder how a poor painter can find the enormous fee for such an undertaking. Let us hope, nevertheless, that you will find a man prepared to assist you for humane and scientific reasons.'

"These and similar expressions of understanding were like little oases in my progress through the desert, and they gave me courage and strength to prolong yet a little further my hopeless quest of a saviour.

"During this last summer at Versailles I began to notice that when I was standing in the street, or walking in the Park, people often stared at me

in astonishment, even in the shops which I had been accustomed to visit for years. I had occasionally been aware of the same thing in Paris during recent years, but never to the same extent as was now the case in Versailles. Moreover, Parisians are the most cultivated, the most indifferent and the most blasé people in the world, while the Versaillese are semi-provincial.

"One morning when I wanted to reach the Park quickly, in order to paint, I took a short cut through a corridor of the Hôtel des Reservoirs, where several young waiters were standing.

"I scarcely noticed them, but I had only gone a few steps when I heard behind me in pure Copenhagen slang the words : 'Look at that smart girl in trousers going to paint !'

"Incidentally I may observe that the hotels in Versailles are full of Danish waiters—I do not know why. Probably because German and Austrian waiters were mainly employed before the War, and, no doubt, owing to their knowledge of languages.

"Enough ! I behaved as if I had heard nothing, but went on my way pondering on the meaning of this compliment—and then it began to dawn on me why I had attracted attention everywhere in recent times.

"A few days later the wife of our house porter, with whom I was on the best of terms, called me aside and said : 'Monsieur must not be angry with me if I confide to Monsieur that the shopkeepers in the neighbourhood where Madame and Monsieur make their purchases will not believe that Monsieur is a monsieur.' With eyes starting out

of her head and mouth wide open she stood stock still while I answered with a smile : 'Madame, I am very much inclined to agree with the shopkeepers.'

"These and similar incidents showed me that the situation was beginning to be paradoxical. Lili could not show herself in the street on her own account, because she and I shared the same body—although not a soul took any notice of her whenever she walked abroad, apart from occasional pursuers. I, on the other hand, was stared at everywhere. Although I was dressed perfectly correctly as a man and took long masculine strides, people took me for a girl masquerading as a man.

"It was not to be endured.

"In the autumn, when we returned to Paris, I noticed that I was beginning to attract attention there also, although it mostly found expression in a somewhat more discreet manner. In the tube, or in the 'bus, or in the tram, I frequently caught looks and words from people who were watching me. The few remarks that I occasionally overheard were enough to convince me that the opinion of the shopkeepers in Versailles was shared by others. With my thorough knowledge of the sophistication of Parisians in general it became doubly clear to me that I was really on the way to becoming a sensation—and this fact made me more and more nervous. My nerves, which had been weakened by the sufferings of long years, simply revolted : they could no longer bear the sight of me pursued everywhere by wondering and curious grimaces. This molestation by my fellows utterly depressed me.

"Thus I went again to the heart specialist with whom I was acquainted. Grete had called on him a few days before and had tried to explain to him my and Lili's double life—and he had promised her to take me to another specialist in Versailles—although, personally, he regarded the whole thing as a fixed idea of mine, and exclusively as a 'diseased imagining without any physical foundation'.

" 'Your husband is healthy. His body is normal. I am speaking from a thorough knowledge, from a thorough examination of his body, madame.' Such was the wisdom of his concluding remarks.

"This visit to the new specialist in Versailles was to be my last experiment, I had solemnly sworn to Grete and myself, before we set out on the journey. On my arrival I immediately received the impression that the two doctors had settled their plan of campaign in advance : they wanted to try to drive out of me my hysterical crochets and whims. After an extremely superficial examination I was told point blank that I was a perfectly normal man without any defect whatever, and that all I had to do was to try to behave as a man with energy and good humour, in order to be able to lead once more the life of an ordinary man *masculini generis*. During this summary of their profound judgment they regarded me with scarcely veiled irony : they looked upon me as an hysterical subject, plainly as a fraud, and one of them, the 'new specialist', even hinted that I was really homosexual. This suggestion almost broke down my self-control. If Grete had not saved the situation by a ringing laugh, repudiating on my behalf

the supposition as utterly absurd, I should have seized the fellow by the throat.

"After this hopeless consultation, which profoundly depressed us both, my last reserves of strength were exhausted. And I swore to myself that henceforth no power on earth would induce me to consult new doctors. I would not run the risk of being degraded again for the amusement of the medicos.

"I said to myself that as my case has never been known in the history of the medical art, it simply did not exist, it simply could not exist. Thus my doom, which was also Lili's doom, was sealed. All that now remained for me to do was to go on living with all the patience that I could muster until the short term that I had set to my life had expired.

"Outwardly, nothing changed in the routine of our daily life. I was even cheerful when friends or acquaintances visited us, but particularly so in my behaviour towards Grete, as I was afraid that she might see through me. That she was seriously perturbed I could divine from her whole attitude. She kept her feelings well under control, and generally showed me a smiling countenance, behind which she was able to hide her despondency. She had become so restless. Frequently, when she believed that I was not observing her, she would look at me furtively with an air of such strange inquiry that I feared she suspected my plans.

"During these weeks I had only one desire : to hear music. Concerts I could no longer attend, as I dared not see people. Consequently, I bought large numbers of gramophone records, classical and modern music, all mixed up anyhow, and during

long evenings our gramophone played until far into the night. I swallowed everything that was music—gay and tragic, the most banal and the most solemn, the most melodious and the most discordant music—provided only it were music. It was my comforter, whether it moved me to tears or prompted me to join merrily in some chorus, or even invite Grete to dance with me.

“At that time I lived on music. If I could not sleep, I fled to music. If I was unable to open my eyes in the morning, Grete would fetch the gramophone from the studio to my bedside. It was not that I was abnormally receptive or sensitive. I was never less sensitive than at this time. I merely felt utterly lost, abandoned to a fate which transcended human understanding. Music, the language of the soul, liberated me. Not to have to speak myself, not to have to give shape to my hopeless brooding, not to think myself nor clothe my vague ideas in words, was my daily and nightly prayer.

“Formerly I had found distraction in reading. Now I never opened a book. What were the fates of strange persons to me, unless I could find consolation in reading about a person of my own kind? But of such a person no author had been able to write, because it had never occurred to any author that such a person could ever have existed. How could the philosophies of the Greeks and of the present time assist me, which only tell us of the thoughts of men and of the thoughts of women in separate bodies and brains and souls? Plato’s *Banquet* . . . hitherto it had been my refuge. Plato was acquainted with persons on the borderline of both emotional worlds, that of man and that







of woman. 'Mixed beings' they are called. But here in my sickly body dwelt *two* beings, separate from each other, unrelated to each other, hostile to each other, although they had compassion on each other, as they knew that this body had room only for one of them.

"One of these two beings had to disappear, or else both had to perish. During these nights I was obsessed by the delusion that this body did not belong to me alone, that my share in this body grew less day by day, as it enclosed in its interior a being which demanded its existence at the price of my existence. I seemed to myself like a deceiver, like a usurper who reigned over a body which had ceased to be his, like a person who owned merely the façade of his house.

"Now and then Lili would still appear, and Grete was delighted every time she came. Lili was gayer than I. Both of us knew this. And Lili knew it was in her power to comfort Grete. Sometimes, at Grete's request, she remained for several days. In Lili's company Grete was more easily able to bear the nights. Lili could fall asleep more easily. And when she slept, Grete, too, was able to sleep. Lili often wept without Grete remarking it. Lili had always possessed her own dream world. She had always had such delightful dreams. Now her dreams had vanished. They revisited her just for a few nights. And every dream was a continuation of the previous one. It was winter, and she would dream of a coming spring which was very sunny. She told Grete these dreams, but she felt that they were only dreams. And then would come fear. The next night, however, a still more beautiful

dream would drive her fear away. Grete once told me that she had secretly recorded many of these dreams in her diary. And she said this as if she were betraying a secret.

“‘Lili has dreamed you a romance,’ I said to her, and turned empty away.

“But this dream-romance became the favourite subject of conversation between Grete and Lili during those dark days, and these talks were the only thing that gave Grete and Lili new courage and kept alive their hope that a miracle would somehow happen.

“Thus we reached February. Elena and Ernesto were in Paris again. And one morning Elena took me with her to the strange man from Germany. Now it is the third of March. In less than two months it will be the first of May. That is the extreme limit of the period which I gave myself. Then Andreas Sparre will exist no longer. Whether Lili will survive this day and live out her own life rests in the hands of Werner Kreutz.”

## IX

**W**HEN Andreas entered his hotel, it was almost morning. He stood at the window of his bedroom and gazed down at the square in front of the railway station. A number of taxi-cabs were there, a few belated pedestrians. A gleam of light was visible from the glass wall of the long narrow booking-hall.

He was very tired.

Slowly he undressed. He stood nude in front of the mirror. He thought of an expression he had used that evening : "I am like one who only owns the façade of his house." The mirror in front of him showed him the façade. It was the unblemished body of a man.

After a few hours he awoke in a cheerful humour, took a bath, breakfasted, punctually paid, one after another, his last visits to the various doctors, and felt almost carefree. In the middle of the Leipziger Strasse he heard a child's voice whisper : "Look, mamma, a woman in man's clothes." He turned round, and encountered a frightened look in two girlish eyes, probably a ten-year-old, with a thick, fair pigtail ; the child blushed a fiery red and clutched hold of her mother, who regarded him with as much astonishment as her daughter, and then hurried along with the child.

A remarkable feeling of grim defiance welled

up in him. Without meaning to do so, or even being aware of his action, he remained standing in front of a shop window, gazing inquiringly at his own reflection in the smooth plate-glass window. Irritably he muttered to himself. "There is nothing more to be done with me. There is nothing more to be done with me." Several times he repeated this sentence, and then looked at his watch. It was half past four in the afternoon, and at five o'clock he had to be in Professor Gebhard's sanatorium.

He found himself in Potsdamer Platz and entered the post-office. In the huge telephone directory he looked up the number of Baroness Schildt, whom he really ought to have visited before, and asked to be connected. She was not at home. He despatched a few hasty lines by post :

"Dear Baroness,

"Do not be angry if you should not see me again. In a few minutes I shall be calling a taxi and proceeding to my own funeral-tomb, Professor Gebhard's sanatorium. Whatever happens, think kindly of me. And if Lili should alone survive, do not let her be quite alone. I know that not all my men friends are her friends, but I should like her to inherit my women friends."

He threw the letter into the bag of the postman who was just emptying the blue pillar-box. He pressed a shilling into the worthy fellow's hand. The postman looked at him astonished. Before the man could thank him, Andreas was in the

nearest taxi. He gave the driver the exact address of the nursing-home, and punctually at five o'clock entered the sanatorium.

He was immediately led to the house-surgeon, who regarded him with a benevolent mien.

"I have just had a long telephonic conversation with my colleague Kreutz about your case," the Professor began. "Previously I had been talking to Doctor Arns about it. He will be present at the operation which I have to perform. I should now like to have the opportunity of making your acquaintance. A personal impression is always very desirable."

Andreas answered to the point: "Please, Professor, ask me what you like." But the Professor preferred a physical examination to all questions, requested him to undress and lie down upon an adjacent sofa of a type which had become very familiar to him since he had been in Berlin.

"Yes," declared the Professor, after making a detailed examination, "in yourself you are entirely what you represent yourself to be in civic life, a man, but at the same time your body undoubtedly shows a female conformation. I am surprised at the state of affairs." And while Andreas was dressing himself again, the surgeon paced the room thoughtfully, regarded the patient without pausing, glanced at his diary, and then said: "I know you are in a hurry. Come early to-morrow morning."

"That is not convenient, because I am to be photographed by Doctor Hardenfeld at eleven o'clock to-morrow morning before the operation, at Professor Kreutz's wishes."

"Good," declared Professor Gebhard, after

again consulting his diary; "four o'clock in the afternoon will also be convenient. To-day is Monday . . . then to-morrow, Tuesday, afternoon."

"So we have a further reprieve," he said to himself, and looked at his watch. It was nearly half past six. A taxi-cab was in the neighbourhood. He gave the driver the name of his hotel, and spent this last night of all alone in the hotel bedroom. He felt that his body and nerves could not stand any more strain that day—yesterday's sleepless night, the conversation which had preceded it, the noisy, strange giant city all around him.

"I am no longer a player myself. I am only a substitute for Lili. I must therefore be sparing."

Tuesday morning Andreas left his hotel early. It was a bright March day; he strolled along the Friedrichstrasse, then turned into the broad highway of Unter den Linden, and found himself in the Pariser Platz, facing the smooth, austere Brandenburg Gate. This beautiful and almost classically perfect perspective was bathed in the keen, bright sunshine of March. The painter awoke in him. He went into the Tiergarten. Sunshine and budding vegetation everywhere. And the dead leaves were glistening like bronze. He strolled along a path which led to a lake, on which ducks were swimming. The branches of lofty trees were reflected on the surface of the water.

He had never been there before. He absorbed the picture. He thought of the many morning hours of his past life as a painter, spent far from towns and people, and he blessed the fate which had made him a painter, a creature of utter

simplicity who surrendered himself fully to the enjoyment of the moment. Not to lose this precious moment was the impulse which found release when he painted. He usually painted feverishly, and could scarcely wait to catch the picture while it presented itself to his gaze, this gaze which was purified by the winds of travel, which saw more than the vacant stare of others, and which was brighter than that of others. Clairvoyant. How fond he had always been of this word, and how it recurred to him at this moment !

He had always been one with this intangible and restless something, this play of light and shade, of claire-obscure, with colour and form. His attitude had been like that of a sly bird-stalker who laid in ambush and knew all the calls that would allure what he sought.

Thus he had created his pictures, spellbound on the dead canvas with dead colours, until what he had divined with his eyes suddenly began to take on a life of its own. . . . Captured echoes, he had then usually confessed to himself. My pictures are only feeble echoes . . . He had been happy and very humble, like an initiate. And these hours had been the only real and genuine joys of his life. These joys had belonged to him, to him alone, he could not have shared them with, nor could he have stolen them from, any other person. They had been exclusively *his* wealth, *his* property. Could he transmit this property, this wealth ? This question had never occurred to him before. Can one transmit joy ? The joy of painting ? For him, Andreas Sparre, these joys had gone beyond recall. And if Lili should survive him,



would she feel any desire to paint? Would he be able to bequeath her as a heritage this joy, this blissful feeling of creative capacity, as a slight compensation for the life he had stolen from her, for the many youthful years he had deprived her of? His consciousness of guilt which so often weighed heavily upon him would be thereby lessened.

He must now think of Lili, who had such different inclinations from his; but why now think of inheritance? What great thing had he ever accomplished? True, he possessed a small token which he had to share with nobody: the golden "palm" of the Paris Academy. Oh, vanity!

He wondered whether it was not time to return. He was standing upon an elegant lightly balanced bridge, whence he could look over a wide canal which poured its masses of water over a sluice drawn half-way up, so that it hissed and glittered like a miniature waterfall.

"I am just like one who is trying to sail under a waterfall," he reflected, "and I feel the current catching hold of me, and I no longer know whither the voyage is leading. Perhaps into complete destruction. . . . Yet . . . now, half-way, the boat cannot be left. The resolution is taken. I cannot go back."

Half an hour later he was at Dr. Hardenfeld's, waiting for the photographer.

A lady, Hardenfeld's assistant, then came to him in the waiting-room, and began a conversation with him. He merely listened. She was tactful, and he felt that whatever she said was not dictated by curiosity or importunity.





"Your case is a novelty for us here. And what adds to the interest which we take in you for scientific reasons is the fact that you are an artist, an intellectual, and therefore able to analyse your own feelings, your own emotional life. You will experience the unprecedented and incredible thing : first to have lived and felt as a man, and then to live and feel as a woman. I am reminded of that Roman emperor who took his life because he could not achieve what is now *your* fate."

At length the photographer arrived. When Andreas left Dr. Hardenfeld's institution, he invited himself to a "farewell breakfast". With great care he selected an appropriate restaurant for this purpose in the West End.

Then he repaired to his hotel, paid his bill, and proceeded to Thomasiusstrasse, to bid farewell to his friends.

"You don't look exactly like a victim," affirmed friend Niels the moment he entered the room.

"Nor do I feel like one—on the contrary," laughed Andreas.

While Inger wrung her hands : "But, Andreas, in a few hours you are going to be operated upon, and you come here with a cigar in your mouth almost as black as a crow."

Before he was aware of her action, she had snatched the cigar out of his hand.

"Please, I have just come from the last meal before my execution, or, speaking more correctly, I have celebrated in the most literal meaning of the words the *enterrement de ma vie de garçon*."

Inger took his hand. "I have not been a nurse for nothing ; I know how one should behave before

an operation. Certainly not as you are doing, Andreas. It is a stupid boyish trick to go and feast. It is putting on airs. And now Niels will go with you to the nursing-home."

And so it fell out. Without a cigar, Andreas entered the sanatorium under his friend's supervision.

The operation sister received the two gentlemen, conducted them to a room next to the operating-theatre, the door of which stood open. A few nurses appeared to be making everything ready for a new operation. A strong odour pervaded the place.

Professor Gebhard was, unfortunately, unable to arrive until nearly six o'clock, and the gentlemen must therefore have a little patience. They would be notified in due course.

The time was scarcely four. Niel's face assumed an expression of utter despair. "I can't stand waiting here two hours," he said almost contritely, and intimated that he would like to spend the period of waiting with the patient in the large café situated close at hand.

When they had found seats in the café opposite the newspaper stand, Andreas detected a few yards away from them a red-haired cripple, a newspaper boy. Andreas sprang up in a trice and moved backwards towards the cripple, who observed this proceeding with astonishment, for which he received a shilling from Andreas, and then another shilling after Andreas had touched his very solid hump.

"My dear Niels," he then said by way of answer to his friend's astonished look, "I call that friendship ! To bring me in the presence of such a splendid

hump at the eleventh hour. For you know, of course, that such a fellow infallibly brings one luck. A superstition, for aught I care, but now I feel invulnerable. To touch a manly hump works wonders, but a female hump the contrary."

"Which we will whet with a noble drop of Rhenish wine, as a burial drink so to speak, according to the good old Nordic custom." And already Andreas had ordered from the head waiter a bottle of the very best vintage. "But three glasses, please."

"Three?" enquired Niels.

"Of course; the cripple must drink with us." Nor did the red-haired fellow want asking twice. "The like of us is used to plenty of sorrow," replied the hunchback, making a low bow. He seized the proffered glass, and clinked it with that of Andreas: "Your health, my dear sir. May your good soul long survive you!"

"The fellow speaks like a prophet," cried Niels. But Andreas clasped the red-haired cripple in his arms, then released the astonished man and raised his glass. "So be it!" And he clinked his glass with that of the hunchback. When Andreas and Niels at length departed, the red-haired cripple gazed after them, shaking his head.

In the room of the nursing-home which was awaiting Andreas lights were already burning. A nurse ushered him in, took the patient's personal particulars, hung a thermometer over the bed, and requested Andreas to lie down immediately. The doctors would soon put in an appearance.

"I suppose it is best that I should go at once," inquired Niels.

Andreas nodded. "Well, old chap, so long, and I

will do all I can to fulfil the red-haired fellow's prophecy."

Niels was about to say something more, but Andreas pushed him to the door. A brief handshake, and Andreas was alone.

He paced up and down. Once, twice, thrice. Without knowing it he began to count his steps. So the room was seven paces long and six paces wide. Then he sat on the bed. He regarded the room. A room in a nursing-home like countless others. Bright walls, and bed and table and cupboard and the two chairs likewise painted a light colour.

And then he began to undress very slowly. Suddenly it occurred to him that he, Andreas Sparre, was probably undressing for the last time . . . that what was now taking place was a farewell to coat and waistcoat and trousers and so on and so on. For a lifetime these coverings of coat and waistcoat and trousers had enclosed him. He contemplated the articles of clothing, one after another, as he took them off; he hung the coat over the waistcoat, and then both upon the hanger in the cupboard, as he had been accustomed to do since . . . yes, since when? He stretched the trousers in the trouser-press, and looked at one article after another, and stroked each in turn. "What will become of you? What will become of me? Which of us here will survive the other? I—myself? I—you? . . . Coat, waistcoat, trousers, shoes, underclothes, socks. . . ."

And he picked up his hat off the table. "You too. I had almost forgotten you. Who else have I forgotten?" And he slipped his hand in the inside

pocket of his coat, took out a picture, and stood it on the table against the wall. "Grete," he said, and started to stroke the picture. A knock was heard and the door was opened. Professor Gebhard entered, accompanied by his assistant doctor. A few questions were addressed to Andreas, with the result that, to his surprise, the performance of the "first operation", which involved no danger whatever, as the Professor explained, had to be postponed to the following morning. "'Gravol' is what you call such farewell celebrations in the North," laughed the Professor. "Your friend has already betrayed to me the Rhenish wine. Congratulations ! You seem to know your way about there. But operations of this kind are best performed on an empty stomach. In a few hours' time we will give you a sleeping-draught, so that the time between now and to-morrow morning will not seem too long to you. And now, courage." A handshake—and Andreas was again alone.

"So it's always wait, wait, wait, wait," he said to himself. "However, much patience must one have," he said, addressing the portrait which stood on the table next to his bed.

"Grete." . . . More he could not say ; he leaned back on the white pillows, stared at the ceiling, and felt tired.

He had struggled to the goal. He became sensible of the bustle of the day here in Berlin. Now he had to confess that he was at the end of his forces. And the last remnant of his masculine pride, which he had been dragging about with him in this strange million-headed city like a cuirass, fell away from him.



"Grete, it's a good thing you can't see me now."

No weakness . . . stick it out.

He had laid a writing-pad and fountain-pen on the table. He took a sheet of paper and wrote :

"Berlin,

"4th March, Tuesday evening.

"Dearest Grete,

"To-morrow I shall be operated upon. The Professor says the operation in question is only a minor one, involving no danger. Consequently I have not besought you to come to me. Should it, however, turn out otherwise, I will tell you now that I shall have thought only of you every hour, every minute up to the last moment. My last wish is that your future should be happy—that you should inherit my fundamentally joyous temperament. Thousand kisses from Lili.

"Yours, Andreas."

When Inger entered his room an hour later, he gave her the letter and asked her to give it to Grete, in case.

"You great booby, I have known all along from Niels that everything will be all right. I have even gone to the café and taken a few flowers to your somewhat unusual guardian angel." He went as red as a turkey and said : "This is the luckiest day I have had."

At ten o'clock the assistant doctor entered again. He gave Andreas the promised sleeping-draught. Then the nurse appeared, tidied up the room, and switched off the light.

They let him sleep on until the middle of the

morning, when the doctors were expected to arrive. He had hardly time to make a hasty toilet before Professor Arns was standing beside the bed and requesting him to sign a declaration that he, Andreas Sparre, desired to be operated upon at his own risk, and that Professor Gebhard was relieved of all responsibility in the event of an unfavourable outcome.

"With pleasure," he declared, and he immediately signed the document which was addressed to some high authority, and which said in effect : "In case I die, I renounce all right to make any difficulties hereafter." "But may I not add a few words of thanks to the German doctors," he asked suddenly, "who are going to make an attempt to save me?"

This request was laughingly declined, and then the Professor announced : "The operation will take place in a few minutes. I am present at the desire of Professor Kreutz, so good luck." He then withdrew.

When Andreas was again alone, he wrote yet another letter :

"My dear Professor Kreutz,

"At the last moment before my operation I yield to an impulse to express to you my heartfelt thanks. Since the day when I met you in Paris I have been hopeful, and here in Berlin, where I know none of the doctors who have examined me and assisted me, an invisible power seems to have smoothed all my paths. I know that you are this invisible power, and that whatever good things have come my way have emanated from you. Whatever the result

may be, I want you to know that I am enormously grateful for all you have done for me.

"Your attached Andreas Sparre."

Now everything was in order.

A moment later the assistant doctor entered the room.

When Andreas woke up again, in violent pain, it was almost noon. He opened his eyes with a shriek. Gradually he realized that he was lying in his bed. It seemed to him as if he had been crying out for a long time, as if he were resisting something. Two nurses were standing beside him and speaking soothing words. When he recovered consciousness he felt the pains growing more violent. With an effort he regained control of himself and clenched his teeth. He would leave off screaming. And, in fact, he screamed no more.

"Did I make much noise?" he inquired.

"Well, just a little," said one of the nurses with a smile, "and the strange thing was that your voice had completely changed. It was a shrill woman's voice."

Then Professor Gebhard came in and took Andreas by the hand. "It went off splendidly. Moreover, I must congratulate you. You have a splendid soprano voice! Simply astounding."

Towards the evening he was awakened by a fit of coughing. It seemed as if his whole body were being torn asunder. The coughing was terrible. He had tried to suppress it, but without success.

At last the fit was over, and he lay exhausted. The nurses wiped the perspiration off his forehead.

"You must have smoked a lot?" she asked. "Perhaps even yesterday."



THE FIBE, WOMEN'S CLINIC, DRESDEN, JUNE 1930



On the table by the bed lay a cigarette-case.

"Throw them out of the window, Nurse. I will never put a cigarette or cigar in my lips again." The nurse smilingly removed the cigarette-case. "Don't forget your vow!"

"I swear it to you and to me." And he thought of the cigar which Inger had taken from him yesterday. It was the very last cigar which Andreas had smoked.

Fresh fits of coughing in the course of the evening deepened his sudden hatred of tobacco to such an extent that the very idea of tobacco filled him with nausea. And this fanatical aversion from the enjoyment of tobacco in every form he inherited from Lili.

Niels was admitted to him for a few moments.

"You're going on fine, what?" he began immediately.

"Oh, yes." More than that Andreas could not bring himself to say. Niels looked at the nurse in astonishment.

She whispered to him: "I suppose you are surprised at the clear voice."

Niels nodded. "I cannot recognize it."

Then he sat on the one chair next to the bed. "Inger sends you her greetings. Otherwise . . ."

The nurse gave a hint. Niels stole out of the sick-room. And Andreas whimpered: "Nurse, give me an injection. . . ." It was not the only one he had during the night. It was an endless agonizing night. Not until dawn did he manage to go off into a short heavy sleep. By the time he was fully awake, about noon, he felt as weak as one who had been wandering through a desert. But the pains seemed to have become more remote.

Only now and then the question would surge up in his mind, "Who am I? What am I? What was I? What shall I become?"

Soon afterwards Inger came—with flowers and a large bottle of eau-de-Cologne. Flowers! How their scent transformed the sick-room!

"Drench me with eau-de-Cologne, Inger! Sprinkle it all over the room!" he cried, almost beside himself with joy.

Then she sat on the bed next to him and began to talk in confident tones. She, who had previously always addressed him as "you" now used the more intimate "thou". He did not realize until many days later that during these first days she never once called him by any name.

Each day she came to see him with flowers and comforting words. So one day, two days, three days passed. Andreas slept most of the time. No dreams came to him in the long nights, through which he was assisted by sedatives. And every morning Inger was with him with fresh flowers.

One day she brought with her a perfectly magnificent spring bouquet.

"This time you must not thank me. The floral greetings are from a good friend."

"From Claude Lejeune?"

Inger nodded.

She opened the note attached to the bouquet and read:

"Each flower of my bouquet is a greeting to Lili."

For a long time the flowers concealed the

invalid's eyes, and even Inger could not see that his eyes were weeping scalding tears.

"Will Claude ever find her again?"

"Whom?"

"Lili."

Saying which, the invalid handed Inger a card, on which he had scribbled a few lines.

"Did you write this?" she asked.

"Yes, Inger."

"But then she is there already; Claude's Lili. Just look."

He gazed at the card and failed to recognize his writing. It was a woman's script.

Inger hurried out and met the assistant doctor, who was standing in the corridor. She showed him the card: "What do you think of this, Doctor. No man could have written it?"

"No," said the astonished doctor; "no, you are quite right. One thing after another is pushing out."

"One thing after another."

Andreas distinctly heard the words.

And the doctor answered: "Haven't you noticed the voice is completely altered? It has changed from a tenor into a clear soprano."

When Andreas was again alone, he spoke softly to himself. He wanted to listen to his own voice. But drowsiness overcame him and he fell asleep once more.

He woke up suddenly in the middle of the night. A terrible shriek startled him. At first he thought that he had himself screamed. He clenched his teeth. But the screams were heard again. No, he had not screamed. It was like the shriek of a tortured animal. He could not stand it any longer.



"Someone is being murdered ! Help, help !" he cried, and reaching out his hand, pressed the bell. The door was flung open, the light switched on. A nurse stood in front of him. "What is the matter with you ?"

"With me ?" Once more the screams rang out.

"I was so terrified, Nurse. Is somebody dying ?"

The nurse closed the door and drew the heavy felt curtains along. . . . "A young woman has given birth to a child . . . a sweet little girl. . . . I suppose you never realized what a difficult thing childbirth is ?"

The next morning Inger arrived early.

"Who do you think is coming in a day or two ?" she cried, as she entered the room.

"Grete ?"

"Yes, here is her letter."

He had to extract the letter from a huge bouquet, and was still reading it when Professor Gebhard, accompanied by the assistant doctor, came into the room.

"Tell me, please, Doctor," exclaimed Andreas, "when shall I be able to get up ?"

"Why the haste ? You are doing very well here in bed amid flowers and soft hands."

"But there is a hurry, Doctor. In three days my wife will arrive."

"Your wife ?" The Professor was taken aback. "All right, then, but have a little patience. Madame will certainly find you somewhat changed."

Then he hurriedly left the room with his companion.

"Did I do anything absurd, Inger ? The Professor looked at me with such an amused expression."

"Stupid Lili !" was the only answer that Inger could think of.

## X

**T**HREE days later Grete arrived early in the morning.

The nurse on duty knew at once who she was.

A few moments later she was in the sick-room.

Grete stood in the middle of the room with outstretched arms, and could not stir. She was struggling with her tears. She wanted to throw him a gay greeting, but sank down sobbing by the side of the bed.

Late in the evening, when she was alone with the turmoil of thoughts and sensations that assailed her, Grete wrote the following letter to their friend in Paris, Claude Lejeune :

“I can only hint at what I have been through to-day. I thought I should find Andreas. Andreas is dead, for I could not see him. I found a pale being. Lili, and yet not Lili as we had known her in Paris. It was another. New in voice and expression, new in the pressure of her hand, unspeakably changed. Or was it a being who is in process of finding herself? No doubt the latter is the case. So womanly and untouched by life. No, womanly is not the right word. Maidenly, I ought to say. Perhaps childish, fumbling with a thousand questions in the dark.

A 'nova vita'. I cannot find words to express my meaning. I have been shaken to my depths. What a fate, Claude ! A fit of uncanny shuddering grips me whenever I reflect upon it. It is a mercy that Lili herself is too weak now to look backward or forward. She is hardly able to realize the condition she is in at the moment. I spoke to the doctors.

"The first operation, which only represents a beginning, has been successful beyond all expectations. Andreas had ceased to exist, they said. His germ glands—oh, mystic words—have been removed. What has still to happen will take place in Dresden under the hands of Professor Kreutz. The doctors talked about hormones; I behaved as if I knew what they meant. Now I have looked up this word in the dictionary and find that it refers to the secretions of internal organs which are important for vital processes. But I am no wiser than I was before. Must one equip oneself, then, with wisdom and knowledge in order to understand a miracle ? I accept the miracle like a credulous person.

"What I found here in the nursing-home I would call the unravelling of the beloved being whose life and torments those of us who have shared with him all these many difficult years, have felt to be an insoluble riddle. Unravelling. . . . That's what it is. But the unravelling is not yet finished. I know it, and Lili suspects it. She is not yet allowed to see her lacerated body. It is bound up, and to herself and probably also to the doctors is still a secret which only Kreutz can unveil entirely.

"Everybody here, the doctors, the nurses, our friends Niels and Inger, have candidly expressed to me their astonishment at the almost miraculous outward change in 'our patient'—for they do not rightly know whether they ought to address this being as a man or a woman. What is their astonishment compared with mine? They have been seeing the invalid every day. But I, who had been parted from him only two weeks, should have scarcely recognized my beloved husband. And as it has fared with me, so it will one day fare with you and Elena and Ernesto, to whom you must show this letter.

"More than this I cannot write now, except to say that Lili, this sweet new Lili, lay in my arms like—oh, I must say it, because it is the truth—like a little sister, weeping many, many tears, and all at once said to me with a gentle sob in her voice : 'Are you not angry with me'—looking at me with so perplexed an expression—'because Andreas has robbed you of your best years?' Claude, I was too shocked to utter a word—and when at length I could have said what I felt, I dared not do so. Not me, I thought, has Andreas robbed, not me, but you, Lili, my sweet pale Lili, of all your girlish years. You and I, Claude, and all of us, must help to compensate Lili for the fraud which Andreas has practised on her."

Many months later Lili read this letter. Claude gave it to her.

The next morning—Grete had spent the night

alone in an hotel—the head nurse proposed to put another bed in the sick-room, so that Grete could be near the patient until the departure for Dresden, which was appointed to take place within a few days.

“Splendid !” whispered Grete, delighted, and taking the nurse by the hand she led her into an adjoining room, which stood empty. Swiftly she fetched a trunk which she had left in the corridor, opened it cautiously, and drew out a silk *négligée*.

“How becoming you will look in it, madam !”

“I ? No, Nurse ; it is a present from our Parisian friend for our—patient inside. But not a word, please, until to-morrow morning !”

And when morning came it found Lili sitting in the most charming Parisian *négligée*, still very pale and limp, but nevertheless quite gay, in the white sick-bed. And the assistant doctor could hardly believe his eyes. “Famous ! Congratulations, miss ! And if you promise to be very good and careful you may get up to-day for two hours and show yourself to your astonished friends. More than this we cannot permit for the time being.”

One nurse after another rustled in. Their astonishment was unbounded.

Such was the reception accorded in the Berlin nursing-home to the miracle performed upon this still very fatigued human being, a reception unmingled with curiosity or excessive inquiry ; and when Professor Gebhard paid a visit in the evening, he kissed the patient’s trembling hand as if it were the most natural thing in the world : “Good day, mademoiselle,” he said ; “I congratulate you. You are on the right road.”



BY GERDA WEGENER (GRETE SPARRE), WITH LILI AS MODEL.



Then he noticed Grete for the first time. "Ah, madam, welcome."

For a moment the Professor and Grete confronted each other mutely, not without suppressed emotions.

Then Lili broke the silence. "Yes, Professor, this is Madame Grete, who . . ."

The Professor gave a good-humoured laugh. "I know; who was married to Monsieur Andreas Sparre, who has slipped away from us in such a miraculous manner. Men are deceivers ever, madame." And with this happy expression the tension of a difficult situation was relieved.

Lili surrendered herself to all this as if unconcerned, during her *first* Berlin days. Observers could detect in her scarcely any trace of excitement, but rather a kind of relaxation. Moreover, she avoided replying to any look of astonishment on the faces of others by a word or even a gesture.

"We must leave her in peace," Grete would then say to them in confidence. "She is resting. She is in a kind of transition. She is now getting ready to soar into freedom."

During these days Grete began to keep a diary. Every evening she recorded therein her observations, and the experiences which crowded thickly upon her in the company of the new Lili, in simple, almost fumbling sentences, seeking the way of her friend—this difficult, wonderful way upon which Lili had scarcely ventured to take the first step.

Here is a leaf from the diary that she started :

"Lili bears everything with incredible patience. True, she whimpers every morning, and even



when her bandages are changed, when fasteners must be undone and done up, and when the still fresh scars are painted.

“‘This is all for my good,’ she says with a patience which I have never seen her display before. She has only one wish, to go to Dresden soon, to *her* Professor. She always calls him her Professor, or else her miracle-man. About the past she does not say a single word. It often seems to me as if she were without any past at all, as if she did not yet really believe in a present, as if she had been waiting for Kreutz, her miracle-man, in order to bring her to proper life.”

Here is another entry :

“To-day Inger and I did some shopping without Lili knowing what we were about. We must make some preparations for the journey to Dresden. In the afternoon we returned to Lili, bringing with us a big cardboard box. ‘Guess what we have brought you,’ I said gaily. Lili regarded us calmly, without a smile. ‘I don’t know.’ That was her only answer. Then Inger opened the box. ‘Lili . . .’ said Inger, spreading out the coat in front of Lili, and showing her the silk lining. Lili looked at the coat, and said : ‘But Professor Kreutz will send me away if I appear before him in this attire. He won’t recognize me at all.’ And her eyes looked so sad. Really, they are always sad, even when she smiles. Andreas had quite different eyes. So had Lili in Paris. I think the eyes of the Lili to-day are not yet quite awake. She does not

yet believe. . . . Or is it that she will not yet show that she believes?"

On this day Lili wrote her first letter, to her brother-in-law in Copenhagen.

"Berlin,

"14th March, 1930.

"Dear Christian,

"It is now Lili who is writing to you. I am sitting up in my bed in a silk nightdress with lace trimming, curled, powdered, with bangle, necklace, and rings. Even my solemn Professor calls me Lili, and everybody compliments me upon my appearance ; but I am still feeling tired after the operation and the terrible nights that followed it. Grete has arrived, and has gone out to buy me a warm coat, so that I can travel to Dresden next week. The operation which has been performed here enables me to enter the clinic for women (exclusively for women). And now I feel I have courage for the major operation. A thousand thanks for the cheque. When we leave for Dresden, all letters will be forwarded. Now I can say with a light heart : 'It matters not what pains await me, as I am so happy, and in a few months I shall be quite well, a blooming maiden.'

Your Lili."

"P.S.—I write this letter in great secrecy. Mention the matter to no one."

It was wintry weather in Berlin when some days later Lili, muffled up in her new fur coat, was

allowed to leave the nursing-home for a few hours for the first time. The Professor had "prescribed" for her an automobile drive. You must prepare every day now for the long journey to Dresden," he explained. "Get some fresh air, mix with people, gather new strength."

Mix with people. . . . At these words Lili listened attentively. A secret fear assailed her. She did not, however, betray her feelings. Niels and Inger came to fetch her away with Grete, who did not stir from her side.

When Lili was outside the nursing-home, firmly supported by Niels' arm, she was again overcome with fear. She looked as apprehensive as a prisoner breathing fresh air for the first time after a long spell of captivity. She glanced about her timidly, as if she feared that everything around her was a deception.

She hesitated to proceed.

"Come now, child," said Grete softly to her.

"She is proud," laughed Niels, "and, of course, wants to go alone."

"No, no," protested Lili in a frightened voice, "don't let me stand alone. Just a moment more. I must just taste this air once more. This air . . ."

When Lili was sitting in the car, huddled close to Grete, she closed her eyes. "Don't bother about me. I must first get accustomed to all this."

And thus she drove through the roaring life of the Kurfurstendamm, like a somnambulist, silent and self-absorbed.

The drive lasted two hours, and then Grete put the tired invalid to bed again. She was scarcely able to peck at the food that was brought her

before she fell into a deep slumber, which lasted until the following morning.

About noon Niels called for them both. Lili was in much better spirits. "I shall not bore you to-day, nor myself. I am really anxious to see people."

"Aren't we such?" inquired Niels, amused.

"But I mean strange people—yes, I want to see strange people again."

"A brilliant suggestion," declared Niels, who resolved that they should dine with him, in order to celebrate the occasion. He stopped the car mysteriously outside a telephone-box and descended. He wanted to inform Inger of his intention. And wearing a still more mysterious expression he returned.

In a quarter of an hour they reached their destination. Inger was waiting for the party on the doorstep. She pressed a big bunch of roses into Lili's arms. "Be brave, Lili. Now you will find what you are longing for." And then they divulged to her that in the flat was a young lady from Copenhagen, who knew neither Lili nor Grete, nor—Andreas, and to whom they had announced the visit of "a Frenchwoman imported direct from Paris."

"For heaven's sake!" cried Lili, almost beside herself.

"No contradiction. You must now play the imported Parisienne," declared Inger. "My friend has been told that you understand neither German nor Danish. And she does not understand a word of French. I have told her that you have just had a serious illness, and are still a long way from

recovery. You understand neither German nor Danish." Niels had already taken the reluctant Lili by the arm : "Go right in, my dear," he ordered, and before she could recover her equilibrium, Lili was sitting in the deep armchair of his study, the same armchair in which Andreas Sparre a few weeks before had confessed the story of his life during the greater part of a night.

Then the door opened and Karen Wardal, a young Copenhagen actress, whom Grete and Lili had known for many years, stood in front of Lili. Lili thought that her heart would burst. Her pale cheeks blushed crimson. Yet nobody observed any trace of excitement in her.

"May I introduce," began Inger with a smile, Fräulein Karen Wardel—Mademoiselle Julie Stuart." And then, turning to Grete : "You both know each other already."

"Of course we do !" cried Karen Wardel with enthusiasm. "How is your husband Andreas ?"

And Grete explained that Andreas was very well indeed, but, owing to pressure of work, had been unable to leave Paris. Lili sat still, listened unconcerned at the conversation conducted in Danish, and answered every question which Karen asked in Danish, and which was rapidly translated by Grete or Inger into the most elegant French.

The maid announced dinner. Lili was escorted by Niels into the dining-room. The conversation flowed from one language into another, and Lili behaved like a perfect Parisienne, as if she had never heard a Danish word in her life. She accepted as a matter of course Karen's compliments upon her "extremely chic Parisian costume"—this time

Niels played the interpreter, and in her delight at this extravagant praise of her attire Lili forgot that her hastily improvised wardrobe was not of Parisian origin at all, but had come from a Berlin costumier.

She did not betray herself by even a look. True, she was obliged to bite her tongue many times, when she was on the point of suddenly joining in the conversation conducted in Danish. This comedy lasted nearly two hours. There was a good deal of joking in Danish, and Lili did not laugh until the point of the "Danish joke" had been translated to her in French.

Then she could keep it up no longer. She was tired to death, and begged Grete to take her to her hotel.

She bade a smiling farewell to Fräulein Karen.

"The next time we meet I shall murder the French language," the young actress called after her. "Till our next meeting in Paris ; and don't forget, Grete, to give Monsieur Andreas my kind regards."

Niels accompanied Grete and Lili to the nursing-home.

"Well," he said, when they were sitting in the car, "I should not have thought it possible. Now I can believe in miracles !"

Lili sank back utterly exhausted. In silence she let herself be driven again through the roaring city, now twinkling with thousands and thousands of lights. When the car stopped in front of the clinic Niels had to carry Lili to her room. He bore a sleeping burden.

So ended Lili's first encounter with a strange person.

"And she did not recognize me," she said sadly.

"But, child," answered Grete, smiling, "that ought to make you glad. Lili, my new Lili, does not know anybody in the world yet. You are starting life again."

It did not yet dawn on Grete that Lili's melancholy was inspired by fear of having no friends.

## XI

**T**HE next morning news came from Professor Kreutz in Dresden. Everything was ready for the patient's reception. If the patient's physical state allowed, the journey to Dresden might be undertaken immediately. But before going it was desirable to pay a visit to Doctor Karner, who had tested Andreas' blood barely a fortnight previously, to enable him to take a test of the patient's blood after the first operation.

Grete read the communication to Lili very slowly, her voice trembling with excitement.

"We will leave to-morrow morning, of course," said Lili.

"Good ; but in that case we must call on Doctor Karner to-day." Saying which, Grete hurried out of the room in order to telephone to Dr. Karner's laboratory.

When she returned a few minutes later with the news that Dr. Karner would not be available for another hour, she found Lili standing in front of the window holding Professor Kreutz' letter in her hand.

"Lili, we can start at once. We could walk part of the distance. This will do you good."

"No, no, not walk. I cannot yet show myself in the street." And her eyes filled with tears.

On the way Grete mentioned quite incidentally that the Doctor's assistant, to whom she had



telephoned, had not understood her name. "It was, indeed, somewhat difficult to make it clear to her."

It so happened that their taxi and Dr. Karner's car arrived at the laboratory at the same time.

"Good day, Doctor," said Lili, immediately recognizing him and extending her hand.

"Good day, madam," answered the Doctor, momentarily surprised, as if he were trying to remember her name.

Lili looked in front of her, then looked at Grete, and at last took courage to say: "I have come from Professor Arn's nursing-home. I am Lili Sparre." It was the first time that she had pronounced her name. She heard herself speaking. A feeling of shame overwhelmed her. "Don't you recognize me, then, Doctor?"

"But of course, madam, of course," answered Dr. Karner, although it was obvious from his tone that he had not the least suspicion of the identity of the person standing before him.

"I understand it is a question of taking a blood test," he continued nervously, and conducted the two ladies through the entrance hall and then into a waiting-room.

"Yes, Doctor; but are you still unable to recognize me?"

The Doctor only became more confused. "Sparre . . . Sparre . . . of course the name sounds familiar. Mr. Sparre was here about a fortnight ago. He too was sent to me by Professor Arns. But I cannot call you to mind, madam."

"The gentleman and I, Doctor, are, in fact, one and the same person," stammered Lili.

"I beg your pardon." Completely dumbfounded, Dr. Karner looked from one lady to the other—then looked at his watch, and made a quick bow. "Oh, excuse me a moment—the ladies are foreigners, of course." And he bounded out of the waiting-room.

Beside herself with confusion, Lili looked at Grete. "I think I shall lose my reason."

Grete laughed. "Your doctor is certainly of your opinion. He did not understand a single word of what you told him."

Suddenly Lili began to laugh. "But that is splendid. He too, then, did not recognize me."

A nurse came into the room and requested Lili to follow her. The Doctor was waiting for her in the laboratory, which Lili immediately recognized. He was holding a small instrument, similar to a morphia syringe, a transparent glass syringe. He smiled, still somewhat embarrassed. "Please, madam."

She heard the title ringing in her ears . . . madam.

"Please, madam, will you sit down, and turn up your sleeve above the elbow, so that I can get at the veins. So. . . Much obliged, madam."

With a distinctness never before experienced, Lili caught every word he uttered. It seemed to her as if the words were floating in the room. Her eyes gazed steadfastly at the syringe, whose needle was boring cautiously into her arm; she saw the glass container slowly filling with her blood, and she fainted.

When she came to herself, she looked around timidly.

The doctor was standing by the patient's chair with a smile on his face.

"Have I been lying here long, Doctor?"

"Only a few minutes. Did it hurt as much as all that?"

"Hurt? Oh, no. You must not think that I am usually so bothersome."

"Of course. Mr. Sparre was not either. Sparre; if I understood aright, madam, your husband . . ."

"Mine? Yes, yes." She was so confused that she did not know where to look.

Then the Doctor laughed. "So I did understand you correctly before. The German language is a very difficult language. What you said before sounded very amusing—as if you had said that you and your husband were one and the same person. Ha, ha, ha!"

"But, Doctor——"

"Believe me, madam, even a German utters the most incredible stupidities when he tries to make himself understood in a foreign language. However, to go back to your husband—a stoic of a man, if you like. Now I remember, of course—although he looked ill and exhausted when he sat before me in the same chair that you are now occupying—he said not a word about his sufferings, declined even to hint at them. Instead of this we conversed in the way usual among men here, especially when one comes from abroad, that is to say, about politics, while I was tapping his blood. Of course, I know very well that this cannot be done without hurting, although your husband behaved as if—and really with success—while you, madam . . ."

"Please, Doctor "

"But, madam, that is your vested privilege, as a representative of the weaker sex, while your husband is, if I may so express myself as a doctor, a prototype of the *masculini generis*. . . ."

"My dear Doctor"—Lili now broke into a ringing laugh ; she had risen and was staring at him almost insolently—"if you only knew what a lesson you had read me with those words !"

"Lesson ?" The Doctor chivalrously leaned over her. "But I have nothing but admiration for you, madam. You allowed the same blood test to be taken unbidden, in the same way as your husband—which, moreover, was very sensible. Only women can really do such things. A pain shared is a pain halved. Have I not come well out of the business ?"

"Splendidly, Doctor. And now, good-bye."

"Good-bye ; and my kindest regards to your husband."

"Grete, dearest," said Lili, when they were again in the open air together, "I have now got to the point of accepting with calm amusement the comic side of such a situation as I have just been in, without the flicker of an eyelash. If I did not do so, I should either go mad or lose myself."

In the evening Grete wrote in her diary :

"Lili is still trying to find her feet. People do not make it easier for her. By people, I mean the former acquaintances of Andreas."

"Come," said Lili, "now I will take my first walk through Berlin."

So they both went from Dr. Karner's laboratory through the bustle of the great city, jostling strange people. It was a fine spring day. The sky was cloudless and softly blue. The air felt like a prolonged caress. The faces of the people they met, Lili noted with gay excitement, had such shining eyes. "Do I look like that, Grete?" she asked many times. And as they strolled arm in arm they often stopped in front of shop windows. She never grew weary of gazing at their display of silks, and she saw her reflection in every plate-glass window. "Grete, tell me, do I look all right in my furs? Do I look any different from you?" And Grete smiled on her. "Child, remember your Dr. Karner—and be glad that we have progressed so far as this."

Lili desisted from her questions, but every now and then her eyes would dart a glance of inquiry. Questions innumerable were stirring in her breast; but she refrained from uttering them. She forced herself to show a smiling face, and whispered to herself again and again: "Nobody knows me and my fate here in the great city. Nobody mistrusts me. Nobody. I can carry my secret about with me in peace. Nobody is betraying me. And it is a bright day with plenty of sunshine."

Really tired, she clung to Grete's arm. "Grete," she said at once, "Grete, you are not ashamed of me?"

When Grete regarded her with surprise, Lili behaved as if something had flown in her eye.

"But what's the matter?"

"Nothing, nothing; we go to Dresden tomorrow, and I am glad Niels is going with us. Sometimes I feel so afraid. I don't know why."

This feeling of dread became so alarming during the last night before the departure for Dresden that Grete was obliged to summon the assistance of the head nurse.

Lili wept and wept through many despairing hours. "I cannot . . . I cannot. . . . How can I look Professor Kreutz in the face? He doesn't know me. He doesn't know who I am. I am afraid. I would rather die first." When at length she could weep no more, she lay in her bed, staring in front of her.

A thousand apprehensions assailed her. The railway journey to Dresden, all among strange people . . . the arrival in another great city . . . the way to the clinic . . . more strange people, with curious eyes . . . and then the Professor. How would he receive her?

Lili did not know herself what was going on within her.

Grete had long since packed the trunks, had found time for many cheery words, had talked about indifferent things, while Lili was lying totally unconcerned.

"And to-morrow I shall be with Professor Kreutz, and nobody can help me—nobody." She kept saying these words in a whisper. And when Grete told her that she and Professor Kreutz had only a single thought, which was to help her, and that it was ungrateful to despond just now, Lili only shook her head in a tired way. "Grete, I know better. Nobody can help me. It is much too hard for a tired soul."

In the morning, when Grete was still sleeping—she had not dropped off until very late—Lili

rose, dressed, contemplated herself, and stole softly, so as not to disturb Grete, towards the not very large mirror which Grete had brought with her and hung over the night table, converted into a dressing-table. She was not pleased with what she saw. Ugly and inexpressive the reflection appeared to her—a dull, tired, anæmic mask. She sat down on a trunk and buried her face in her hands.

“Lili, Lili !” Grete’s arms were round Lili’s neck. “Now you look like a mother anxious for her child.”

“Anxious for her child ?” Lili slowly repeated the words. “Yes—for her ill-bred child, as if such a mother could ever be cheerful.”

So the day started, and its hours crawled slowly by. Niels was an early arrival.

“Our Lili looks like an officer’s miss,” he cried, enthusiastic—“haughty and condescending ! An incredible phenomenon.”

In half an hour the phenomenon will be on its way to its destination, Lili reflected. The phenomenon. And she pulled herself together. Nobody should see tears in her eyes to-day. Nobody. She must empty her mind of all thought. Thus she was driven to the station, with eyes which looked as if they saw. But they saw nothing. In the waiting-room she let herself be persuaded to take breakfast with the others. She was obedient. “To-day I will have no will of my own, Niels ; to-day I will do what you both order me.”

An abundant breakfast table was hastily improvised. “This spread,” announced Niels solemnly, “is to celebrate Lili’s departure on her first overland journey ”







The waiter had placed a pint tankard of Hofora in front of each. Niels raised his tankard towards Lili, and Grete, the dainty, elegant Grete, raised, not without considerable difficulty, her tankard towards Lili—and Lili was no spoil-sport.

“Skaal, my dears,” she said, “or prosit, as we must say here !” And before Niels had clinked his tankard against Lili’s, she had taken a generous draught.

“Bravo, bravo !” cried Niels, so loudly that many of the people in the waiting-room looked around them.

Lili immediately put down her beaker. “Please, please don’t excite attention.” She was stretched on the rack all the time.

Yet she wanted to be gay. Moreover, as she honestly acknowledged, the fresh aromatic beer had a glorious taste. And this refreshing breakfast with crusty Berlin rolls and liver sausage and cheese, a real German morning meal—did not in the least resemble an invalid’s diet.

“It makes me feel quite a new being,” she confessed. “It tastes like resurrection. If only it gets to that point. Prosit ! Long live life !”

When it was time for the train to leave, Lili, clinging all the time to Niels’ arm, pushed through the crowd on the platform so quickly that Grete had difficulty in following them. A corner seat in a second-class compartment was found for Lili, while Niels and Grete secured seats opposite to her.

With merry, wideawake eyes, which absorbed every trifle around her like a new experience, Lili rode into her new life.

The landscape between Berlin and Dresden is a series of endless, monotonous plains, thinly wooded, and here and there coloured red, white, and yellow by small settlements, villages, townships and towns, broken only by occasional placid brooks and streams—a picture devoid of excitement, a panorama calculated to soothe and lull. Low overhead hung a blue-grey sky, while the fresh morning wind drove golden clouds merrily before it like young lambs just released from the fold. Then a large, bright green rectangle would swim into vision—a winter crop with the ears already sprouting, between silvering willow trees, while a dark islet of cloud lowered spectral overhead. Sharply defined on the eastern horizon was a church tower. Then the sun emerged from a heavy bank of cloud, and flooded the whole world with a golden light. The telegraph wires buzzing up and down in front of the carriage window. A flock of partridges ascending from a dark patch of marshland and disappearing into a silvery birch wood. A signalman's cottage with silver-birch trees and a few fruit trees, stunted and cropped, and fluttering between them multi-coloured washing. A woman pressing her hands on her hips, her eyes fixed on the train, beside her a fair child with a glaring red ball in her hand, and a brown Pomeranian dog squatting beside the child. Shoo—past ! The woman's expression was plainly visible. A piece of blue-and-white washing was waving like a flag in her right hand. An unpaved country road curving towards the railway embankment. Two heavy farm-horses drawing a heavily laden cart. The driver lashing out with the whip. The sun gilding

him and the whipcord and the tin lid of his bowl-pipe, lighting up even the puddles in the deep ruts of the cart-track. Behind a far-flung ridge tower factory chimneys, and white and greenish-yellow smoke-plumes wind into the blue until a breeze breaks them up and they become golden clouds.

Lili's eyes had become the eyes of a painter, and a tremor passed through her. "Those are not my eyes. They are Andreas' eyes. Is he not yet dead within me? Can he give me no peace, then?"

She closed her eyes. She could not understand why she was so afraid to look at, to grasp and to love the world, as Andreas had done. Was it because she feared she would never get on to her own feet, never be loosened from—Andreas?

Grete and Niels had gone into the corridor in order to smoke.

In the compartment there remained two German gentlemen of very correct appearance. The two corner seats by the door belonged to them.

Up till then Lili had scarcely noticed her fellow-travellers. She had kept herself entrenched behind newspapers.

Suddenly one of the gentlemen laid his paper down and the other gentleman followed suit, except that he almost solemnly folded up his newspaper. Involuntarily she looked at him, and he returned her look very deliberately. "Hm!" he grunted at least four times. The other gentleman flicked off some dust, and removed his light-brown, very solid gloves. A thick diamond ring came to light. He cleared his throat again. Lili drew her furs closer about her. She felt the look of the two "lords

of creation" fixed upon her. She put on a very haughty expression.

"Ahem," said the gentleman next to her. "Do you mind, madam?" She nodded her assent.

He offered her a heavy cigarette-case, inlaid with gold: "It is, to be sure, a non-smoker; but both the other people—ahem."

Lili smiled: "No, thanks."

"Hm!" And the gentleman shut his case with a snap and deliberately put it away in his pocket.

The gentleman opposite unfolded his newspaper.

And Lili looked out of the window.

A little dainty birch wood upon a hill under the sun. Two diminutive mother-o'-pearl clouds overhead, like wings which a child angel had forgotten in play.

Niels had returned, and was again sitting in his corner seat.

"Early spring," he said; "early spring, Lili."

And Grete, who also returned at this moment, repeated the word, "Early spring. . . I never heard the word Vorfrühling before. A beautiful word. Oh to be out there painting as I used to! . . ."

Then she broke off, avoided Lili's look, and closed her eyes.

For a whole hour they sat thus silent.

In Lili's ears Grete's words still echoed: "Early spring . . . painting as I used to," and she completed the sentence, "with Andreas."

Was it jealousy which was now stirring in her?

No, no; the idea was impossible.

She leaned across to Grete—no one saw it, not

even Niels, who had fallen asleep like Grete, while the two strange gentlemen were standing outside in the corridor smoking—and laid her hand in Grete's lap. Then she rose and sat next to Grete, laid her head against Grete's shoulder and gazed out of the window again. Ranges of hills were billowing up, growing into small mountains, and new ones kept joining them, dotted with villas. And eventually everything became a confusion of villas and gardens and tenement houses—between which factory buildings reared their heads and streets opened like canals between columns of houses, while the columns of houses became great settlements full of pulsating life. Trams, cars, people, clamouring advertisements on blank walls, a wide ramification of railway lines on either side, trains with an endless line of coaches, a station on the right hand and the left hand, a continuous shuddering of the carriage as it slid rumblingly past the points.

Then the train stopped.

Niels woke up.

"Shall we soon be there?" asked Lili.

"The next station." She awoke Grete.

When the train started again, all three of them were standing at the window. Now they were crossing the long bridge, under which the broad, dark river extended like a glistening velvet ribbon, and Lili saw Dresden's domes and towers and roofs emerge from the shimmering water-surface. Slowly she looked up and saw that it was no phantasmagoria—this magnificent city on both banks of the River Elbe, ascending from the broad valley to green hills and the soft blue sky.

She knelt on her seat and stared out and drank in the picture of this place of pilgrimage, longed for so ardently and vouchsafed her in return for so much suffering. And her eyes became too full and too heavy. She closed them, and pressed her hands against her heart. The tears she wept were the soft tears of faith. A feeling of boundless happiness flooded her whole being. "Now I am home . . . now I shall soon be home."

Niels laid his hand on her shoulder. "Child, child."

"It is only for happiness, Niels."

Grete was standing beside her. She could find no word to utter, but many tears to shed.

How Lili got out of the compartment, how she made her entry into Dresden in a taxi-cab, she could never afterwards remember.

It was a long drive. Soon the streets of the city lay behind them, and they were traversing the residential districts. They passed a block of tall buildings, then suddenly the cab turned round a corner. Slender, white, gleaming birch trees raised their filagree-fine branches above a garden wall, behind which towered a grey, solemn, massive block of buildings, comprised of many houses.

"Stop, stop !" cried Lili. "Here we are !"

The next moment the cab stopped in front of a porch, which bore in large letters the inscription :

"MUNICIPAL WOMEN'S CLINIC."

"How could you know that?" asked Grete and Niels, as they were helping Lili to alight.

"I felt that it must be here," answered Lili

very faintly. "Help me a little, so that I can walk. It was such a long, fatiguing journey."

When they stood in front of the porch and rang the bell Lili was pale as death. She heard the pealing of the hospital bell, and it seemed to her as if she was hearing the sound of her own heart.

A white-clad nurse hailed them from the window of the porter's lodge. "Private patients' ward? Straight through the garden, please." By this time it was late afternoon. A soft, subdued light from a watery sky flooded the large garden. Lili led the way. She was home at last.



## XII

**S**TANDING at the entrance door to the private clinic was an elderly white-clad nurse, who was embracing a lady. This was Lili's first impression of the Women's Clinic, and this impression remained.

The elderly nurse was the Matron. She was bidding farewell to a patient.

Then she received the three foreigners with great cordiality, and ushered them into a long hospital corridor. Twilight had already set in, and through the glass panes of a large folding-door at the end of the corridor fell a soft sea-green shimmer, which was reflected on the polished floor and the many white-lacquered doors.

"The Professor will be with you in a moment," said the Matron.

Near the large folding-door were a few arm-chairs and a small table, illuminated by a lamp, where a doctor in a white smock was conversing with two ladies.

Grete seized Lili's hand. "That's Professor Kreutz," she whispered.

"You are mistaken, Grete," said Niels. "Besides, you have never seen him. Surely he is only an assistant doctor."

"Grete is right. It is Professor Kreutz," whispered Lili with a trembling voice





While he was conducting the two ladies to the office, he remained standing a moment and greeted the newcomers with ceremonious politeness, after which he requested them to sit down.

They all seated themselves about the round table. Lili had relapsed into silence. White-clad nurses came and went and said good day. But Lili had eyes and ears for nothing.

Only when the door of the office opened again and the two ladies were ushered out by the Professor, did she become wide awake.

The Matron made a sign to them, and Niels took Lili's hand. Grete remained sitting in the armchair.

Two months before Professor Kreutz had seen Andreas in Paris on a single occasion. Now Lili stood in front of him for the first time. The Professor led her into the office, and then went out again to welcome Grete.

Lili, who had suddenly become very calm, looked about her in the room. It was a large apartment and might have been a study or an operating-room. In front of the large window, which gave a view of the birch trees in the garden, stood a chair for patients, and in front of one wall was a writing-desk, full of papers. Everything in the room was dazzling white.

When the Professor returned, he sat down opposite Lili. She began to chat about her stay in Berlin. Suddenly he interrupted her with a question. His rather stern face broke into a smile.

"Did Professor Arns acquaint you with the result of his chemical and microscopical examination?"

"No, Professor."

"Well, then, I can tell you the welcome news

that all the examinations gave the most favourable results. Everything confirms our assumption."

She breathed again. She was relieved of the necessity of explanations.

She listened to his peculiar velvety voice. A feeling of happiness stole over her. The Professor spoke so sympathetically about everything that affected her that she grew courageous, and suddenly began to relate her experience with Dr. Karner in Berlin. But when she looked up she gazed into Professor Kreutz' eyes, those eyes that were light and dark at the same time, and her words died on her lips. She could not utter another syllable. It flashed upon her that Andreas had been able to talk quite freely to the Professor in Paris. Why could she not do so?

Professor Kreutz regarded her inquiringly, and waited for her to proceed with her story. When, however, she failed to do so, he broke the silence.

"I really intended you to come into the private ward immediately, but, in a most unexpected fashion, every bed is at the moment occupied. This is, perhaps, just as well, as we must wait a little before the operation is performed. I am looking out for a pair of particularly good glands for you."

At this realistic argument Lili shuddered. She did not know where to turn her eyes. She was overwhelmed with shame, and utterly embarrassed.

The Professor seemed hardly to notice this, for he continued calmly :

"Besides, it will do you nothing but good to spend a few days in the hotel, and see the town and our museum. Moreover, you could do some painting. You will find plenty of subjects here. Such a distraction should be most beneficial to you."

At these words Lili seemed to lose all her moral support. The idea of not being immediately received into the clinic, but stopping for days in a strange hotel, appeared to her as monstrous as an undeserved punishment. She wanted to beg the Professor to be allowed to remain there, she wanted to rebel against his decision. She looked imploringly at the Professor, but could find nothing to say except :

“Very well, Professor.”

This ended the interview. The Professor held out his hand, and went out of the room with her to Grete. He mentioned an hotel in the vicinity of the Women's Clinic and bade her good-bye very formally.

Utterly disconcerted, Lili met Grete. She felt as if she had suffered a disastrous defeat. A single glance of this man had deprived her of all her strength. She felt as if her whole personality had been crushed by him. With a single glance he had extinguished it. Something within her rebelled. She felt like a schoolgirl who had received short shrift from an idolized teacher. She heard the Professor's voice ringing in her ear. She was conscious of a peculiar weakness in all her members. She stood there as if in a fog and apprehended nothing. But later, when she recalled this moment, she found an explanation : it was the first time her woman's heart had trembled before her lord and master, before the man who had constituted himself her protector, and she understood why she then submitted so utterly to him and his will.

The hotel which Professor Kreutz had recommended to them was situated in a wide square

surrounded by trees, and had a garden. It was a quiet, select establishment, and was scarcely ten minutes' distance from the Women's Clinic.

A large light room which overlooked the square was assigned to Lili and Grete. Niels installed himself in another room. They were heavy, oppressive days which Lili had now to endure. She could not understand why she could not be immediately received into the clinic. She was almost convinced that Professor Kreutz found her unsympathetic and that she had a repellent effect upon him.

Grete wrote down in her diary :

"Lili is utterly despondent. She thinks the Professor sees in her nothing but a female impersonator, that is to say, Andreas. She imagines that she has an ugly and disagreeable appearance, and that every normal person must be repelled by her. She weeps perpetually. We have gone out on a number of occasions, but, dominated by her fixed idea, Lili thought she could read in every glance of the passers-by a confirmation of Professor Kreutz's aversion. It goes without saying that we foreigners should attract attention here in Dresden, but she blames herself entirely. She is indignant because the Professor suggested that she should do some painting in the interval. That was the worst thing he could have said. Everything that relates to Andreas is detested by her, but especially painting."

In order to break right away from Andreas, she must, above all, avoid practising his most characteristic activity. "The Professor ought to

have known this," said Lili, "or else he intended to convey that he saw in Lili nothing but an impersonation of Andreas."

The following day Grete wrote in her diary :

"Niels was certainly quite right when he said that what the Professor is now doing with Lili is nothing less than an emotional moulding, which is preceding the physical moulding into a woman. Hitherto Lili has been like clay which others had prepared and to which the Professor has given form and life by a transient touch. Up till now, he thought, Lili's femininity has been only superficial, not yet completely wholly genuine. By a single glance the Professor yesterday awoke her heart to life, to a life with all the instincts of woman. The more I ponder over this, the more heartily I agree with Niels. Lili is now silent and completely wrapped up in herself. True, she still weeps softly to herself at times ; but those are the tears of nostalgia. She does not know herself what is happening to her, and I can do nothing more than assist her with encouraging words and patience."

The next page contained the following entry :

"Lili said to me last night : 'It is certainly unjust of me to think bitterly of Andreas, but sometimes I am obliged to think of him, and then I do not quite know what to call him. I think I must call him my dead brother, and to this I must get accustomed. So much so that I cannot any longer realize that he and I have dwelt in the same body and this this body now



belongs to me alone.' Then she said : 'Perhaps I am the murderer of Andreas, and this idea tortures me fearfully, as I surmise that I shall perhaps be of much less value than he. He was a creative person. He was a painter, with a long record behind him. And just because of this I am afraid of wanting to achieve anything. For if I should really once paint and then perceive that my performance fell below his, this would completely upset me, and I would commit suicide !' Suddenly she said : 'Grete, I see in front of me the clothes of Andreas which we left behind in Berlin. I see every article of clothing. And I think of them at night. And I am afraid to go to sleep again, lest I should dream that I was slipping these clothes on.' "

Thus a whole week passed. A deep melancholy hung over Lili, and this melancholy deepened into an icy horror when one morning a number of letters from Copenhagen, addressed to Monsieur Andreas Sparre of Paris, arrived from the Women's Clinic. She would not even touch the letters. Even Grete was not allowed to read the letters. Niels had to burn them. And now Lili was convinced that she would never be able to enter the Women's Clinic.

"The letters have made it impossible. Let us disappear from here," implored Lili without tears, firmly resolved to efface herself in silence. Then like a release, came news from the Women's Clinic that a room was now free for Lili, and Grete went with her the short distance to the hospital.

The next day Niels returned to Berlin.

### XIII

**M**ANY times Lili tried to recall the first moments she spent in the Women's Clinic, and every time she felt again the infinite peace which had then settled upon her distracted spirit. A ray of hope, which, like a Bachian hymn, was carried by angel voices to an invisible vault.

All anxiety and unrest fell away from her. Her own life appeared to her of secondary importance, and so valueless. An obscure feeling inspired her with devotion, a feeling of participating in something new and great, something that transcended everything that came within the range of ordinary experience. A white sick-room, brightened by the green reflection from the garden. A white bed. Upon a white table mysterious shining instruments and forceps under a glass case. An odour of ether and formalin over everything. Visits from the Matron, a well-preserved motherly woman in white nurse's uniform with starched white cap on her silver-grey hair. Now and again, penetrating through the folding-door a muffled noise, gradually dying down—the sound of invalid carriages rolling past. And in the white room Grete. Now and then soft voices and footfalls. The door is opened, a slender figure in a white coat enters, and remains standing in the room.

Of this first visit of the Professor Lili retained

only an almost musical recollection. A voice. A vision. What he said to her faded right out of her mind. But from the moment he stood before her in the white sick-room, all her burdens slipped away. And her whole being was flooded with assurance and joyous hope.

Lili went out under the birch trees in the large garden and waited. The Professor had told her that everything would be ready for the operation within a day or two.

The white trees gleamed silvery upon the shining green borders. Their branches stood out against the grey, quivering atmosphere as if bathed in a reddish sheen. Here and there hedges and bushes with their branches still bare. Silky catkins on the few willow trees, and here and there yellow buds. And many seats along the paths. White-clad sisters resting after lunch greeted Lili and Grete. And in the middle of the large garden a bevy of young, pregnant women. They were laughing joyously and happily, and in their blue hospital clothes looked like big crocuses just sprung up.

"Lili," said Grete, "now I understand the beautiful German word 'fore-spring'. Everything here is so full of expectation."

Then a slender man in white overalls hastened across the park to the septic station. An assistant doctor followed him, and a whisper flew from mouth to mouth : "The Professor." All eyes were riveted on him, and everything seemed to stop for a moment.

And then the turret clock of the clinic struck. Six o'clock. It was time to return to one's room. The park was already dark. Arm in arm Lili and

Grete went slowly into the large house. The lights were burning in the broad, white corridors. Young nurses in white uniforms, with white, tight-fitting caps, were bringing the patients' evening meal. Down below, in front of the Professor's room, stood the Matron. Suddenly his voice sounded through the open door, and Lili shuddered. In a fright she drew Grete with her round the corner into the corridor whereon her room was situated.

"What's the matter?" asked Grete.

"Hurry," whispered Lili, breathless, and slipped into her room. An inexplicable fear had gripped her at the sound of the Professor's voice. Once again she felt like a schoolgirl! The next evening, when Lili was put to bed, she was subjected to all the ceremonies that precede an operation. And Grete sat beside her to offer encouragement. The Professor had already intimated in the morning that if a young woman who had to be operated upon the following day possessed suitable ovaries, the transplantation should be effected forthwith. Excited and happy she bade Grete farewell this evening. She lay awake for hours and stared into the white room. The night-lamp diffused a subdued light. Nurse Hannah, young and pretty, sat beside her, conversed with her, placed a sleeping-draught on the night table, and then softly disappeared.

Lili did not take the sleeping-draught. She was afraid of sleeping too long. She wanted to be wide awake when next morning, her great morning, came.

Not another sound was heard from the corridors. Everything was drowned in the silence of the night. Lili's thoughts were suffused with gentle light.

It seemed to her as if she no longer had any responsibility for herself, for her fate. For Werner Kreutz had relieved her of it all. Nor had she any longer a will of her own.

And suddenly she thought of the past, of Paris. Yet the next moment she fled from this recollection. There could be no past for her. Everything in the past belonged to a person who had vanished, who was dead. How altogether different from her Andreas Sparre had been ! Now there was only a perfectly humble woman, who was ready to obey, who was happy to submit herself to the will of another.

The turret clock chimed again. She heard it many times that night.

When the first streaks of dawn came stealing through the curtains, Lili was already wide awake. It was six o'clock, and at seven o'clock sister Hannah came in and prepared her for the operation. Then there was a long, tedious wait, during which she hardly dared to move. She strained her ears for every step in the corridor, every sound that penetrated thence, and every noise ; but nobody stopped outside her door. Had they forgotten her ?

At length the Matron came into the room and conveyed to her the doleful news that she must wait yet a few days longer, as the invalid in question who had been operated upon had "yielded no suitable material" for Lili.

Disappointment and suspense would have brought her to the verge of tears if the Matron had not informed her at the same time that she was to be allotted a new room which had a large window overlooking the garden and a sunny aspect.

And when Grete arrived a few minutes later the removal to the new room was immediately begun.

Again they strolled arm in arm through the park of the Women's Clinic. How quickly everything here had become familiar to them, even the white-clad nurses, whose morning greetings they gratefully acknowledged ! And Lili smiled happily on the young pregnant women in the crocus costumes. Now and then young doctors passed, and they too wished her : "Good morning, madam."

Lili was happy. Here she was walking quite naturally like a young woman among other young women. She was a creature without any past. Had she ever looked any different from now ? She smiled. Then suddenly she saw Andreas in her mind's eye, how he had regarded charming and elegantly dressed women in Paris, and had almost envied them their elegance. How dull and insipid, he had often said, was male attire ! Now all this was past and over—obliterated as if by a gesture of her master, her creator, her Professor. There was no longer an Andreas ; he could never return. Now between him and her stood Werner Kreutz. She felt secure and salvaged.

Here in this little state within a state men ruled with absolute power, with the Professor at their head. The Matron was the single exception. In spite of her maternal benevolence, she was a very decisive lady, whose energetic profile under the silver-grey hair might recall the Bourbons in their splendid period. Her personality compelled respect—she was the only person in the Women's Clinic who enjoyed, to a certain extent, the confidence of Werner Kreutz.

One morning she intercepted Lili and told her that it would certainly not last much longer. Perhaps to-morrow, perhaps the day after to-morrow, the operation could be performed.

"Tell me, Matron," asked Lili abruptly, "why are really healthy ovaries removed from a woman?"

"But, Miss Lili," answered the Matron, "it would take too long to explain this to you, especially as you do not possess the necessary anatomical knowledge to understand it. But be easy in your mind, the Professor knows what he is doing. Leave everything to him. Moreover, you need not have any fear, as your operation will be quite a minor one."

Lili laughed.

"I have no fear at all, Matron. In Berlin I was also told that it was only quite a minor operation which was to be performed. And subsequently I learned that I was nearly an hour and a half on the operating-table. Whether this new operation is dangerous or harmless does not bother me in the least. I have not come here to die. Of that I feel certain. I could have done this without the help of the Professor."

The Matron drew Lili close to her. "You will be very pleased to know, Miss Lili, that the new ovaries which the Professor proposes to ingraft upon you will give you new vitality and new youth. The woman who is to be operated upon is, in fact, scarcely twenty-seven years old."

Lili's voice trembled with excitement. "Is it really true, Matron, that the age of a woman is determined by her ovaries? Is that really the decisive factor for a woman?"

The Matron patted Lili. "How curious you are! But if you don't believe me, you can ask our Professor."

"Yes, of course. Why have I not done so long ago? I will ask him this very evening."

But when the Matron asked on the following morning whether the Professor had satisfied her curiosity, Lili felt very ashamed. "No," she said; "I forgot all about it."

The Matron lifted her forefinger and laughingly threatened: "Why not say quite honestly that you did not dare to do so!"

"No, I did not dare to do so," confessed Lili.

"It needn't make you blush, my dear Miss Lili. Why should you be any different from the other women in the hospital?"

Two days later Grete filled many pages of her diary. This was the day on which the great operation was performed on Lili. And the night was far advanced when Grete wrote:

"At nine o'clock this morning I arrived at the clinic. The Professor had told me yesterday evening that the operation was to take place to-day. Cautiously I peered into Lili's room. Lili lay in a white night-dress in her white bed. She was quietly sleeping. She had been given a morphia injection. I cautiously retired to the long corridor, where nurses were waiting for the Professor. Nurse Margaret came out of the board-room, wheeling a table on castors, with ether bottles, cotton-wool, and instruments under glass cases. The Matron appeared and cast a searching eye over everything. The head doctor



and a number of young assistant doctors came out of the operating-theatre. Everybody spoke softly. A strange stillness reigned in the broad, white corridor. A greenish light drifted through the high window, through which could be seen the still bare trees of the park, and, lit up by the morning sun, the wing in which the Professor's quarters were situated. A covered gangway connected the first storey with the main department of the clinic. Thence all eyes were directed.

" 'Now we are still waiting for the Professor,' said a little nurse to me in a whisper. I could scarcely control my agitation, and stared continuously out of the window at the Professor's quarters.

"Suddenly there was a movement among the nurses. Involuntarily I seized the little nurse's hand. Everything around me was in commotion. I saw the Professor approaching the clinic with rapid steps, and the next moment I heard him greeting everybody with a polite, 'Good morning'. He was very ceremonious and unapproachable, even towards me, although we had always been on very friendly terms. I did not venture to address him, nor even to follow him, when, in company with the head doctor and the Matron, he disappeared into Lili's room. He resembled a general on the eve of a decisive battle.

"Minutes passed. I stood by the open door looking upon the garden. The morning sunshine streamed in. I was no doubt very pale. The air was of spring-like warmth. A few birds were singing in the trees. A golden haze hung over them, and a soft wind blew in, smelling of grass

and earth and mingling with the strange, all-penetrating hospital odour. Then the door of Lili's room was opened a little, and a hand was put out. Sister Frieda, who was standing in front of the door, hastily took a bottle of ether from the movable table, handed it in, and the door noiselessly closed again. Soon the sickly smell of ether escaped from the room and penetrated everywhere. I felt as if I were going to faint; but I pulled myself together.

"An endless time seemed to elapse, and then the door opened again. The Professor and the Matron came out. The Professor took my hand and looked into my eyes. 'Don't worry,' he said softly, and disappeared to make further visits. The ambulance was pushed out of the door, followed by two nurses. Underneath a white covering lay Lili. I could not recognize her face . . . it lay under the ether mask. Then the white procession disappeared along the white corridor into the operating-theatre. How long would it last? I kept saying to myself: Don't think, don't think. What are they doing now to this poor creature? In what form will Lili be returned to me? How cheerfully she looked forward to this moment? A miracle was to be worked on her. Would it succeed?"

"Restless, I wandered out into the garden, and strolled along all the paths of the great park, but could find no peace. Went back to Lili's room. All the windows were open. The spring sunshine was flooding the room. But I could not stop there. Finally I sat down in an armchair in the corridor and waited. There I was able

to see everything that was going on. It was so quiet. Now Lili was lying under her Master's knife. No, I was not afraid. I believed in him, as Lili blindly believed in him, as in a higher Power. And I thought of this man, whom I had recently tried to paint.

"And now I realized how all my powers had been bent upon an effort to retain this masculine head in a portrait. What power radiated from this strange person? Here in this Women's Clinic was a god, whom all feared, whom all revered. In what did his power consist? And I recalled his face. Was it really handsome? No; strange, rather. No feature of his face was really handsome. Everything, even the eyes, were irregular. And yet a striking harmony characterized the whole, a force, an emanation of force. For days I had tried to capture this face, to retain it in many hasty sketches. I knew all his attitudes, all his movements. This arm-chair had been my daily observation-post. Opposite his office. I knew precisely the time he came and the time he went. His visiting times, and his promenades through the rooms.

"I closed my eyes in order to collect my thoughts. I saw distinctly the slender back of the Professor in the long white overall. I saw him in my mind's eye, as he would throw back his head with a sudden jerk. I saw him as he would advance towards me, his hands outstretched and a stern smile playing about his lips. Every time I had seen this smile I had felt as if I must weep. I had seen so many men—smiling, handsome men, important men, and



LILI ELBE, COPENHAGEN, OCTOBER 1930



others. This weeping, this fear, all this emotion had nothing to do with my heart. I knew that. For I had never for a moment been in love with this man. And yet how often had I cried myself to sleep, thinking of him ! Yesterday, in the centre of the town, among strange people, I had a vision of this smile. And it flashed across me that I would gladly sacrifice my life for this man.

"But why, whence came this feeling ? And then I told myself that I was only one of the many who believed in this man through the mere force of belief, who believed in the helper in him through their belief in some kind of helper. As I now sat here in the armchair in the white corridor I realized that my feeling for this man was nothing less than the feeling which Lili cherished for him in the deepest recesses of her heart. With her it is certainly still slumbering, for she is as yet merely a vague being. *Vorfrühling* : early spring ! This word suddenly sounded like music to my ears. Would Lili really see it ?

"I was still sitting with closed eyes when suddenly the door of the operating theatre was flung open and Werner Kreutz was standing in front of me . . . still in the indiarubber apron. His gait was tired. He held out both his hands and gave me a broad, benevolent smile. I only heard his words : 'Everything has passed off well.' I clasped both his hands. And I could only stammer : 'I thank you.'

"Not until a few hours later did I learn what had happened inside. To find words in which to put it is unspeakably difficult. A whole human

life which I shared with another floats before me as I write these words. A human being who was born a man, who was my husband, my friend, my comrade—has now become a woman, a complete woman. And this human being was never intended to be anything but a woman. Like a sacrificial animal he has been dragged along with me for years until this German doctor brought him help ! And to-day this human being has laid here bleeding under the knife of his helper. His body was opened, and disclosed a state of things which the craziest imagination would hardly have considered possible. The body of this human being contained stunted and withered ovaries which were not able to develop because an inscrutable Fate had also given him the others, the male germ glands. This secret of existing as a double being, hitherto divined by no doctor, has only been unveiled to-day, after Werner Kreutz had guessed at its existence in Paris, and like a wizard deciphered it.

“I can find no other words with which to express my meaning. And now this poor creature, so heavily handicapped by Fate, has had removed from its body what had formed such an obstacle, thus enabling it now to develop as its blood had dictated for years, namely, as a woman, and it has been equipped with unimpaired female germ glands from another, a strange and quite young creature. Then this tortured body was sewn up again, and now nothing more is left, not a particle is left of my life’s comrade and fellow-wayfarer—Andreas. He is the dead brother of Lili, who now lives, of the woman who has

shared flesh and blood with him for almost a lifetime.

"But the thought which haunts me is that though Andreas may now be extinguished, and though Lili may have risen like a phoenix from the ashes, yet in the world outside Andreas is still living in the eyes of the law, and I am his wife. Who is capable of grasping this horror, this fantastic idea, this unique happening? She whom it concerns most nearly, Lili, is still lying lulled in the mists of merciful morphia.

"What will life now bring her? Will the miracle of the doctor, the miracle of his art, be great and strong enough to be perpetuated in Lili's life? All of us have been instruments of this fate. I not least. For it was I who many years ago enticed Lili out of Andreas, in wanton play, as a chance masquerade! And it was I who continued playing this game with Andreas, until what had been play became earnest, most mysteriously earnest. But I must not think of this now; I cannot help thinking of the one person who never really believed in Andreas, but only in Lili, Lili's most intimate friend, Claude Lejeune. What will he think when he sees her again?"

There is very little that Lili can remember of this day, which henceforth she called the day of her proper birth. When she opened her eyes for the first time, she saw a few sunbeams stealing through a rift in the drawn window-curtains. Then her eyes closed again and she slept long and heavily. When she awoke again, it seemed as if



she had been dreaming. Here, to the left of her bed, in front of the window, she had seen the silhouette of the Professor, and beside him the head doctor. The Professor had asked something. Good ! "Have you a good bite ?"

She had answered with a humble : "No, Professor," suppressing with difficulty a smile.

And then the Professor had ordered : "Count. Either in Danish or French, just as you like."

She had started counting in German : "One, two, three," when an ether mask had been slipped over her face. She found it difficult to breathe. She went on counting : "Four, five, six, seven." The counting became harder and slower. When she came to eighteen, she felt as if she were suffocating. She heard the voice of the Professor : "Twenty, twenty-one, twenty-two . . ."

His voice sounded above her like the ticking of a clock, which grew louder and louder, until everything became one continuous buzz and she lost consciousness. Was it a dream ? Or had she been stupefied ? But why had they left her lying here so long without operating upon her ? Until she had awakened with this unpleasant ether taste in her mouth ? "You haven't any bite ?"

She heard this question again. But the smile gave way to a terrible pain. With a shriek she opened her eyes. The Matron was standing beside her, smiling to her and whispering : "You've come through all right. It went off splendidly. Now everything is going on well." But her eyes had already closed again, and she was sleeping. When she was awakened again by pains which became more and more acute, Grete was standing

beside her with a bunch of red tulips. A nurse came in, gave her an injection, and she went off to sleep again. Once the Professor stood beside her, held her hand, and said something that she did not understand. But she saw his eyes, and with a drowsy feeling sank into oblivion again.

That day and the night which followed it were passed in the mists of morphia. When she awoke, the pains were there, but a sister was also beside her with a morphia syringe. She was conscious of acute thirst. Moist cotton-wool was laid upon the parched mouth. But the injections of morphia caused even thirst to be forgotten.

Thus morning came. Everything had really passed off very well, and peaceful, natural sleep soon enfolded her again. The following days stole by softly and mistily. If she was attacked by pain, it was repelled by narcotics. If she opened her eyes, she would stare in front of her as if astonished at everything that had happened to her. Gradually she became accustomed even to the pain ; she told herself that these pains were the price to be paid for what had been bestowed upon her, her own life, her woman's life. The prospect was fair and hopeful. Her white room in the Women's Clinic seemed to her like an earthly paradise. The Professor was the guardian of her paradise. Morning and evening he stopped for a few moments by her bedside. Between these visits all was expectation.

Grete was always at hand during these days. From the door leading to the garden she painted the white birch trees and the garden paths. If she saw the Professor coming, she would hurry back to Lili.

It was only of the nights that Lili was afraid. Then Grete was far away, and the flowers which she had brought had been removed from the room. Flowers had also come from Paris, from Elena, and from Claude. And letters—these letters were the sole companions of her long, long nights. And the turret clock striking the hours. And . . . the pains ! They started almost regularly every night. Her bed would then become a glowing oven. She would lay there bathed in perspiration. The Professor had ordered her to sleep ; but she was to have no more morphia. Other sedatives were administered to her ; but they were effective only for a few hours. Then she would lay awake watching for daybreak.

And the day became fair again, and again there was the feeling of blissful expectation. She listened for every footfall—she had long since been able to detect the footfall of her helper amidst all other footfalls. But he did not always stop at her door. Other patients had need of him. Then she would wait patiently until her turn came. Here in the clinic everybody was waiting for the Professor. Everybody had to share in him, and each woman received her share, even if it were only a tiny share. When he smiled she forgot all her pain. Sometimes he was strict, and then she felt a mystical fear of him. And she divined that he behaved quite differently towards her than towards Andreas. He never hinted at the past by so much as a word. Was she only Lili for him ? Sometimes she felt a craving to ask him about it, but she never dared to do so.

And for hours she would lie there and ponder

over this oft-recurring question. She felt as if he had deprived her of her will. She observed how he sought to evoke her feminine impulses by being alternately mild and stern. Had he not deliberately provoked an eruption of all the primitive instincts of her womanhood? She felt the transformation proceeding with every new day. It was a new life. It was a new youth. It was her own youth that was seeking to liberate itself. And she lay there, believing.

## XIV

**S**PRING, the great miracle-worker, also came to Lili's assistance. Yet she must still pass many days chained to the bed, in the white sick-room. But with each new day her life became healthier. The pains departed. Everything took a normal course. The Professor was satisfied. She was still utterly exhausted. And hence it came about that she lay as if wrapt in a coma, and she spent most of the day absorbed in herself and dreaming. The world outside did not trouble her. She was hardly aware of it. Newspapers and books which were brought to her she left untouched. She had only one wish : that nothing should ever be different, that she could always remain here, in the peace of the Women's Clinic. And when the thought sometimes occurred to her that the day would come when she would have to go forth into the world outside, beyond the park wall of this large, quiet house, she was assailed by overwhelming fear. Thus she developed a desire to remain here as a nurse, to build up her strength in order to be able to help other women once she was well. Now and then she broached the matter to Grete or to the Matron, or the other nurses, who merely nodded. Once she asked Grete if she might not speak to the Professor about it. Grete thought she might. But immediately a

fresh fear welled up in her. "If he should say no ! Perhaps I shall not be strong enough. Perhaps he will tell me that he did not save me for this. . . ." And Grete had no answer.

During many long nights Lili's fear of life outside sought refuge in another peaceful thought. Could she not enter a convent, become a nun ? She fell into reveries of remote, secluded convents somewhere in Italy, Spain, or South Germany. No one should know there whence she had come and what a destiny had been hers. No one. . . . She would weep for hours for fear of the life outside, of this life which seemed to her like an enemy. There her secret would be rudely unveiled, and she would be regarded as a phenomenon. Her fate would be the subject of vulgar gossip ; she would be stared at, and she would not be left in peace. And the healthier her body became, the more vivid became her fear of her future among people. Yet she no longer dared to speak about it to others.

At length the morning came when she was allowed to leave the sick-room for the first time. Lying back in a bath-chair she was pushed into the warm, sunny April morning, into the middle of a soft green garden. It was her first untrammelled, happy day. She was like a newborn babe. All her senses were fresh and full of wonder. She saw every insect which fluttered in the blue sunny air and every flapping of wings from tree to tree. The scent of the little yellow pink-and-white spring flowers of the hedges and borders held a new message for her. And with attentive eyes she regarded a magnolia tree holding up its large, glistening buds to the sunny air. Upon a branch

sat two young birds huddled closely together. Lili closed her eyes. A soft wind played about the white birch trees. The spring soil smelt sweet and warm. The birds twittered.

To keep her eyes shut, only to listen, only to smell. More than this she could not do. In this posture the Professor found her. "You look very happy," he said, and patted her hand.

"My life is your work," she reflected. "And I should so much like to thank you for the first spring day of my life, because you were merciful to me. I believe I am the happiest creature in the world." But all this remained unspoken; she felt it only in her heart.

"You look happy," said the Professor, and she merely answered :

"Yes, Professor."

Many happy spring days came, and at last the day also came when she could be lifted out of the invalid's chair and walk a few steps in the garden on Grete's arm. Everything was as before, and yet everything seemed so changed, she thought. And on all the paths she saw again young, pregnant women, like blue crocuses, as she thought, smiling.

One morning, before she had strolled out into the park, Grete and the Matron came into her room and handed her a sealed letter, which had come from Berlin. She opened the letter, and a profound emotion overwhelmed her. A few weeks before the Professor had told her that he would assist her to confront the world for what she was, a woman. He had promised her to write to the Danish Embassy in Berlin. Now she took from the envelope a passport, her own passport with her

own photograph, and upon the passport was written the name which she had chosen out of gratitude to the city where she had found peace and life itself: Lili Elbe.

She sank into the chair and said very softly: "Leave me alone now for a little while." Grete and the Matron understood and went out. For a long time Lili remained sitting very quietly on the chair. She then went softly and diffidently into the park, and sat on a seat which was flooded by sunshine. This little booklet, her passport, she held like a valuable present in both hands. It was the last day but one of April. In two days it would be the first of May. Andreas had kept his promise. He was dead, and she was alive—Lili Elbe.

So the Professor found her. He sat down beside her. Not a word was said. The next morning he came again, and his voice was softer than usual. His rather stern face beamed with benevolence. He held her hands and spoke many hopeful words to her. Lili knew that in a few hours he would depart, and be away for several weeks. She pulled herself together and tried to thank him for all he had been to her. But she could not utter a word. When he had gone she felt utterly lost. Only one thing gave her consolation: that she was allowed to remain in this asylum which he had given her, and that she might here await his return.

He was leaving for the South.

A few days later everything had become lonely and empty. Easter was over and Grete was saying good-bye. She was obliged to return to Paris for some time. It was a Monday morning. The car which was to take Grete to the station stopped



on the drive in front of the hospital. Lili went with her to the vehicle. It was the first time that Lili had ventured into the world without, beyond the park wall. When Lili returned alone through the park, it was some time before she realized whither she was going.

## XV

**L**ETTERS passed from Lili to Grete in Paris and from Grete back to Lili. The whole city was bathed in spring. The patients spent many hours on the banks of the broad stream which Lili had seen for the first time a few weeks before when she came from Berlin. How the world and her life had changed since that day ! Lili mentioned this in every letter she wrote. They were mostly cheerful letters, breathing serenity and the blitheness of spring. And the letters which Lili received from Paris brought none but joyous news and many cordial wishes. Grete often conveyed greetings from Elena and Ernesto. From Claude came treasured words. Hardly a day passed without bringing a message from friends to Lili. And hardly a day passed but that Lili wrote gay, confident words to her friends. Days and weeks went by quietly, without Lili asking a question.

All her burdens seemed to have slipped away. If she could only stay here always ! Never go away from here ! That was her daily prayer. And so she forgot her fear. She felt invulnerable against all adversity. She was like a piece of ground that was cleared for the first time. And when of a night, at first shyly and then with increasing confidence, she contemplated her body, she experienced a sweet secret joy. For she saw all her members

either swelling or tightening, and how miracle after miracle was working in her. And in these nocturnal hours, quite alone with herself and her joy, she could stand in front of the mirror and gaze at the picture of her young woman's body. It gleamed back at her immaculate from the silvery sheen of the mirror. Yet she dared not confide in any creature upon earth the happiness which she felt in these silent hours. Not even in her letters.

"6th May, 1930.

"Dearest Grete,

"How changed is everything here in the private ward ! Formerly the days were passed eventfully enough, or in the expectation of events, and now nothing happens any longer. On the day of your departure the Matron was called to Berlin on family business. During her absence—which will probably last a week—her place will be taken by Sister Margaret.

"Every day sees the departure of women who are cured. And fresh patients come. There are now three of us in the private ward, and we are sunning ourselves outside in the garden, in invalid chairs on the lawn. There is a fair little lady, still very young, whom I like very much. She looks most attractive. We smile at each other now and then from a distance. But that is all up to now. I do not like the garden any longer. You have gone. And the Professor has gone. What shall I tell you ? I don't know. An oppressive silence reigns here now. Even in my room I walk about softly, as if I feared to

disturb the silence. Everything seems to be wrapped in the magic sleep of the fairy tale."

"8th May.

"Thanks for your letter. It was such a distraction. I am glad that you have fallen into the way of your work again.

"I have made the acquaintance of the little fair lady. When one of the doctors was passing yesterday—we were lying in our chairs out in the garden—we suddenly looked at each other and smiled. So it began. And then we started chatting. It transpired that she is half a Dane her mother coming from Denmark. She said : 'I guessed at once that you are a Dane, from your long slender legs, just like mine. They are the Northern speciality. I inherited my legs from my mother.' And then she proudly showed me 'her Northern speciality'. How glad I am to have once more a person with whom I can converse ! The nurses have nick-named her Mrs. Teddybear, on account of her woollen cloak, which she always wears in the garden. Then she said : 'I think we have the same figure. We could certainly wear the same clothes and shoes.' I think so too. Unfortunately she is not yet allowed to go for a walk, otherwise we should have gone into the town together. She has to undergo an after-treatment, which will, take some time. The third lady, Mrs. Teddybear told me, is an opera singer from North Germany. She is supposed to have undergone a difficult operation.

"I read newspapers, which tell me what the

## MAN INTO WOMAN

weather is like with you in Paris and on the Riviera, where the Professor now is. Have you given Claude my greetings ?”

“9th May.

“Everything here is still wrapped in magic slumber. We hear nothing of the Professor. Nobody knows when the Matron will return. Early this morning a fourth lady joined us in the garden, a young woman who has just had a child.

“Mrs. Teddybear and I have become close friends in the meantime. She has poured out to me her little overcharged heart. She and her husband are not on good terms. She hears almost nothing from him. Yesterday she showed me in her room a portrait of her husband. I believe she is very sad. The poor thing ! She is scarcely twenty years old. Suddenly she asked after—my husband ! I had to pull myself together, for I must not betray myself. And so I merely hinted that matters were much worse with me, so bad that I could not speak about them. Then she did not ask any further questions. She only looked at me very sadly. Her eyes glistened with tears. And I was in no better case. And then we smiled again.

“I am so glad that she has given me her confidence. She is the first woman to pour out her heart to me in my woman’s existence.

“We are now inseparable. With the nurses I stroll about the garden. In the evenings we walk through the streets a little, to look at the passers-by. Yesterday afternoon I went with



LANDSCAPE BY EINAR WEGENER (ANDREAS SPARRE) IN HIS SISTER'S  
POSSESSION



Sister Frieda as far as the Elbe. Then we adjourned to a little café and ate cakes. My first proper walk."

"10th May.

"To-day I am able to tell you something amusing. The young lady who had a baby has a dear old mother who comes daily and always stays a long time. Yesterday in the garden she nodded to me in a friendly fashion, and this morning, as I was lying in the invalid's chair, she came to me, gave me her hand, and asked sympathetically: 'How are you, little woman? I suppose you too have had a baby?' I was embarrassed. But that lasted only a moment. Then I said evasively that I had undergone two operations. Probably the old lady did not hear very well, or misunderstood my answer. I had spoken very softly. And do you know what she answered? '*Two* babies?' No, that is really too much for you!' I had to keep a straight face. If the Professor had heard that!

"If Mrs. Teddybear asks me, what shall I say? It is no joke to be in my shoes."

"11th May.

"The head doctor has a delightful little ape, with whom he often strolls in the garden. It is the dearest little creature. I want to ask him if he cannot take it with him when he makes his round of visits. He is very amiable. I have got quite accustomed to him. He told me this morning that I was now looking very robust. I feel quite well in myself. How happy that made



me ! I should like to look really pretty when the Professor returns. Half his holiday has now expired. You will soon meet him in Paris.

"I am now going for a short walk with the opera singer. Yesterday we made each other's acquaintance. She speaks French quite well."

"12th May.

"Yesterday I exerted myself rather too much during the walk with the opera singer. We had again gone to the Elbe. The weather was glorious. She told me about her operation. Then we talked about the Professor. She said : 'You can have no idea how much I envy you. You will be allowed to remain in the clinic a long time, but my stay is nearly up. It is so lovely and peaceful here, Unfortunately I am very cowardly, as I am afraid of pain. I would rather die than be operated upon again. I admire your serenity. Your operations must have been very serious. and yet you are expecting still another. . . .'

"I had to smile cordially and even a little proudly. I said : 'Ah, one gets accustomed to everything.' You ought to have seen her horrified eyes !

"And so we went on chatting without noticing that we had forgotten to turn back. I had become very tired. The singer simply had to drag me along. At length we got back to the clinic. In future I will be more careful.

"Then I must tell you about a conversation I had yesterday with a friend of Teddybear. She was a pretty, elegant, and interesting woman, only somewhat—learned. She is a doctor here

in Dresden. No doubt Mrs. Teddybear had told her something about myself. We chatted in a very animated fashion about unimportant things. I laughed a good deal. I affected a superficial and careless demeanour. That was all very well in its way; but I had provoked the doctor's displeasure. Suddenly she said: 'You are a hundred per cent woman.' That sounded very sympathetic. 'How do you make that out?' I inquired with a smile. 'You are very coquettish and your head is full of nonsense. I believe you would like the lords of creation to tyrannize over you. But perhaps you achieve more by your methods than we modern women. What we have to fight for you achieve in a twinkling by means of a few tears. You seem to me like a female type of a vanished age.' I laughed saucily. 'And may I ask what this vanished female type is like? I am extremely curious to know.' The lady doctor looked at me a moment before answering very scornfully: 'Women like you are best suited for a—harem.' What do you say to this psychoanalytical diagnosis? When you see Claude, you must tell him. The Professor too. I laughed till I cried.

"Teddybearkins has given me an exact description of her operation. In her room she showed me the scars it had left. She also inquired about mine. I had to pretend to be downright stupid, as if I did not know why I had been operated upon at all. Dearest, dearest Grete, and yet it is so lovely to be a woman here among women, to be a female creature exactly like all the others. . . ."

"14th May.

"Dearest of all.

"Yesterday the head doctor visited me with his little ape. It immediately installed itself on my table. Some salad had remained over from lunch, and this was given the little animal. How well-mannered it was, to be sure ! His master was very proud. After the meal it washed its paws in a little bowl which I pushed towards it. I had to laugh heartily, and I can do so now without feeling any pain. Isn't that fine ? This is a sure sign that everything is healed up. The head doctor then said that I was now so well that I could recuperate in some sanatorium. I declined emphatically. 'The Professor wants to operate on me again !' He looked serious for a moment. 'All right,' he then said, and smiled ; 'but that will only be a minor operation.' Well, I said nothing, but thought the more. I know these minor operations.

"I am so excited over your letter. Perhaps you know when the Professor returns. Here no one knows anything. The nurses think that the Matron will be back to-morrow. Teddybearkins is now permitted to take walks. She is coming for me in an hour's time, and then we will take a stroll through the clinic."

"15th May.

"So the Professor will be in Paris in a few days' time ? Then he will pay Elena a visit. What things have happened since January, since Elena's last conversation with the Professor ! Then she was with him in the company

of Andreas. It hardly bears thinking of. I am trembling all over. Isn't life wonderful? It is lovely. I have become so credulous, so credulous . . . and so grateful . . . and so full of hope.

"I keep reading your letter over and over again. My heart is thumping until it feels like bursting. You will soon see the Professor! You will be there when he talks to Elena! If only I could be there too! I console myself with the thought that he will soon be here again. Then I shall feel saved once more. No one here is allowed to witness my excitement, or to learn what is going on in my mind. It is hard, but it is also splendid. Now I shall count the days and soon the hours . . . and then the Professor will be here again. You will certainly understand my longing. What should I be without him? I owe my whole life to him."

"15th May.

"You will get another letter to-day. The Matron is now back again. How glad I am to see her benevolent, motherly face every day! The whole of the private ward is now undergoing a great spring-cleaning. Everything smells of soap, soda, polish, and new curtains. The clinic is getting ready for the return of its lord and master. The nurses skip along so swiftly that their white skirts look like bellying sails in the wind. Ilse—the little maid who waits on me—is polishing the lock of the door in my room. Everything is shining and sparkling. And she herself glows like one of the newly opened roses in the garden. Later on I shall

take a little walk in the garden with Mrs. Teddybear. It is so sunny there now. The birds are twittering the whole day until late in the evening.

"The opera-singer has now left us, but a fresh lady has already arrived. She has a stern face. She has come here for her confinement. Teddybearkins says it will be a girl. Hence it will not be born until the Professor is back. Boys make no bones about getting born, but girls can only come into the world with the help of the Professor. Her logic is very amusing."

May.

"The white birch trees are now casting long shadows. The sun will soon disappear behind the clock-turret near the Professor's balcony. The bright red blossoms of the magnolia tree—you know it—give off a heavy scent. I am overjoyed ! I am lying in the chaise-longue, in the centre of the garden, and writing to you. It is my Garden of Eden. Soon the Professor will be here again. The rhododendron bushes under his balcony are in bloom. Like great lilac flames they gleam between the fir trees. I have to keep looking and smiling at the balcony. The turret clock is striking six. The thought suddenly occurs to me that you, Elena, and the Professor are now talking to each other in Paris. Perhaps you will be with Ernesto and Elena this evening. My thoughts try to flit through space to you. It is a strangely quiet hour around me. When was I so glad as I am to-day ?

"The Matron had said that the Professor will probably be here in the morning. No,

I stated definitely, not until the day after to-morrow, and I looked very mysterious. She looked at me astonished. She was not aware that I had received a letter from you.

“What a scent from the magnolia tree ! The whole of spring is contained in its fragrance. A petal has fallen on my chaise-longue. The magnolia tree wants to send you greetings. You shall have the petal. I cannot write any more now. I will only think, in blissful silence, of you and my happiness.”

“19th May.

“He came this morning.

“I had made myself as pretty as possible. At first I dared not leave my room—until it became intolerable. I crept along the corridor and spoke to one or two nurses. Suddenly the large folding door opened behind me, and in a trice the sisters disappeared. . . . I stood alone . . . as if nailed to the floor, and could not move.

“ ‘Good morning,’ I heard a voice say behind me. My knees trembled. He came towards me, embraced me, and regarded me with a smile. ‘You look fine,’ he said. I had to lean against the wall, to avoid swooning. I stammered a few stupid words ; but he had already disappeared. And what did I do ? I went back to my room dejected, and wept. Somewhat later the Professor came to me in the course of his rounds. I had calmed down again and was quite rational ; I could listen with composure and without trembling. He told me about you and Elena. He also said that you would soon

be coming to Dresden. Splendid ! Splendid ! He brought a small parcel with him from Elena. It was wrapped in a green silk band. And what did it contain ? A perfectly ravishing night-dress ! The Professor smiled when I showed him Elena's present.

"You see how correctly I guessed ? About six o'clock in the evening of the day before yesterday you were together. My feelings did not deceive me !

"Now I am waiting impatiently for your letter. I hope it will tell me everything that the Professor has told you about me. I feel very exhausted—of the joys of this fine day. Joys, too, consume strength. I do not as yet possess such a terrible lot."

"20th May.

"An hour ago I received your dear letter. I have read it many, many times. I am so glad ! The *last* operation is now imminent.

"The Women's Clinic has awakened from its fairy-like sleep. What activity reigns here once more ! Only you are now absent, else everything would be as it was before. Since yesterday many fresh patients have arrived, and the Matron has her hands full.

"My little friend, Mrs. Teddybear, left me yesterday. The 'stern lady' has had her baby—it was a girl.

"I must break off now. The Professor is passing, and my heart is beating violently.

"I must first get used to the idea that I shall now be seeing him daily. We have had to live

without him three long weeks. It does not matter if I have no longer any friends.

"Ilse is bringing me breakfast. I am not allowed to breakfast in the garden under my magnolia tree. Life is so wonderful ! To be able to stay here always ! It would be too lovely !"

"22nd May.

"I could not write yesterday. Teddybearkins visited me. It was delightful, although I did not believe that she came *exclusively* on my account. Then—think of it—I went out alone. Alone for the first time. I am now allowed to do so. I bought various things : silk stockings, powder, confectionery, and the like. How delightful it is to be addressed as 'madam' ! You must not smile when you read this. I have also bought some lipstick. 'Take these, madam ; guaranteed kiss-proof,' declared the shopkeeper. I bought it with a smile. When I told the Matron about this, she also smiled. Then I wondered to myself whether my smile was not somewhat melancholy. I saw the little shop assistant in my mind's eye. For her it is certainly desirable to use kiss-proof lipstick. But for me ? No, no, no, what am I saying ? It would be best to delete this passage.

"I have received a delightful letter from Elena. She too mentioned a conversation with the Professor about my new operation. I did not understand everything she said. Should I ask the Professor ? It would not come easy to me. He has a strange way of making me submissive. Matron and the nurses are quite incensed over my 'transformation' since the Professor's return ;



they say that I have completely lost my independence. I haven't even the courage to ask him when my next operation is to take place."

"23rd May.

"What a disappointment ! To-day the Professor came alone to me—without Matron. And I plucked up courage. Very cautiously I put a few questions about my new operation. He cut me off short by saying that I was not to let my mind dwell upon the subject. *Basta !* I wanted to excuse myself, and said that I had only asked out of foolish curiosity. I behaved like a schoolgirl. Then I felt his gaze. 'All right, all right. Don't think about such things. Why do you want to burden your young life in this way? Just go on living for the day, without bothering, and leave all the rest to me.' Then he went. I remained sitting in my room crushed. Of course, I understood quite well that I ought not to bother myself about the matter. Sometimes I think that he is treating me in such a way as to obliterate every trace of Andreas which might still be slumbering in me. Certainly this must be why he is so strict with me. If that is really his intention, he is succeeding. You must believe me when I say that I have forgotten Andreas and everything connected with him. For me he is a dead person. If by chance a recollection arises in me, I see nothing but clouds, vague clouds. But I should like to know just how long the Professor intends leaving me out at grass pending the last operation. I am longing for a letter from you. When are you coming ?"

“24th May.

“This will be quite a short letter. I have been in the town with Mrs. Teddybear the whole afternoon. We went into a number of large costumiers’ shops and inspected clothes, hats, and other delightful things. I bought a pair of very pretty shoes with the highest heels that I could find—a combination of varnish and snake-skin. They look perfectly delightful. To-morrow we are again going on the spree. It does me good to go out into the bustle of the town. Otherwise, the waiting for the operation would get on my nerves. I hardly see the Professor these days; moreover, he has a lot to do. Since his return there have been many fresh operations every day.”

“25th May.

“At last! To-morrow it comes off! When shortly after breakfast I was about to say good-bye to the Matron—Mrs. Teddybear was already there waiting for me—she explained briefly and to the point: ‘You cannot go out to-day. You must go back to bed immediately, as you are to be operated upon to-morrow.’ I had to obey. Teddybearkins went with me to my room, in order to console me. Soon Matron came, sat beside me, chatted to us both, and once more assured me that the new operation was a trifle. Then she took Mrs. Teddybear away with her, and I was left alone with my thoughts.

“Even operations tend to become a matter of routine! Strangely enough, I had tidied up my wardrobe and chest of drawers early that

morning. It looked like a presentiment. Everything was now in its place. I had only to say to the nurses : 'In the right-hand drawer are night-dresses and in the drawer below handkerchiefs, etc.' My 'beauty-parlour' I had fixed up in a press beside the bed. Thus I had everything which I needed ready to hand. Your vain Lili would always like to look pretty—even when she is being operated upon. I must do the Professor credit.

"I have had to leave off writing for a short time. Sister Frieda has been with me. The indispensable and not altogether pleasant preparations are over. I am somewhat exhausted. Hence for a few moments I felt very disheartened. The thought occurred to me that it would perhaps be best if I did not survive the new operation. I realize that it is a serious thing—and probably very painful afterwards.

"A few days before I had asked the Matron in jocular mood whether a local anæsthetic would not be sufficient this time, as I had a desire to watch the Professor while he was operating. Moreover, to combine the useful with the pleasant, I should have something more of the Professor's company in this way. His daily visits, in fact, only lasted a few minutes. The Matron looked at me quite horrified.

"'Impossible ! We do not employ local anæsthetics here, least of all with abdominal operations.'

"I hung my head. I wanted to cry. Suddenly I felt a sickly terror. One day I shall have to leave my beloved clinic and my great protector.

Would it not be better for me to sleep quietly between the white birch trees where I have been so happy? But the next moment I realized that I must not think of such things, and that I must not think of dying. That would be treachery towards the Professor, after all he has done for me. No, I will not die. I know that I shall pull through."

"26th May, 8 a.m.

"I am now ready and waiting to be summoned. Since five o'clock this morning I have lain awake. I made a careful toilet, and put on Elena's pretty night-dress for the first time.

"Yesterday evening Teddybearkins sent me a gramophone. I was visited with a crazy longing for music. And behold me—all dressed up—listening to the 'Magic Flute'. While I was looking in the mirror, and raising my arm as if dancing, it suddenly struck me that this silk night-dress was more appropriate for a bridal night than for an operation. Quickly I slipped it off, and put on a quite simple gown.

"Now I hear an ambulance coming. I think it is stopping in front of my door. The nurses will soon be here now.

"If it should turn out badly, you must thank the Professor for all that he has done and tell him that I spent the happiest time of my life in the Women's Clinic. Also give my greeting to Elena and Ernesto—and Claude. I often think of him. Yesterday I received a dear letter from him. Tell him that I will soon write.

"Dearest Grete, everything of good in my life has come from you and the Professor."

“27th May.

“Now things are somewhat better. At the moment of writing I feel scarcely any pain. I know the Professor telegraphed you that everything passed off well. Yesterday’s awakening was horrible.

“‘You must keep your legs still,’ said the Professor. Only then did I notice that my legs were continually moving—as if I were cycling. With pain ! And then they did not stir again—as if they were paralysed. So great is his power over your poor Lili.

“Afterwards he bound my legs fast to a heavy sand-cushion.

“I have no idea how the afternoon and night have passed ! I only know it was horrible. But do not be uneasy ; things are somewhat better now.”

“28th May.

“Thanks for letter and telegram. You need not worry. However terrible my present state is, it must be endured. Yesterday, after waking up, the young nurse who was keeping watch beside me said : ‘Try to smile just for once, madam—the Professor is coming again in a moment.’ Otherwise I cannot recall his being with me. God knows how much morphia I have taken since the day before yesterday. Probably my groans and screams could be heard a mile away. Prior to the last two days I had no suspicion of what pain really meant. Yesterday evening the little sister sat beside my bed and wept, I believe out of sympathy. But to-morrow

I shall certainly be better, and then I will write again."

"29th May.

"How dear of you to write every day! It comforts me in my misery. The worst is that I must not move. I have a tube in the abdomen, and consequently I must keep my legs still. Thank God, I can move my arms, otherwise it could not be endured.

"I do not like to show myself to the Professor—without powder and rouge. In the morning I spend whole hours on my toilet—however hard I find it. Often my arms drop out of sheer weariness. You have no idea what exertion it calls forth, and the result is mostly insignificant. Vanity? Perhaps it is just my vanity which is sustaining me these days. It is the means of giving me some occupation. Sometimes I even think that the most immortal element in me is my vanity.

"There is a new nurse, who is called Ellen, and who is always good-humoured. She and the little Frieda look after me in turn. They are terribly good to me. I may not yet laugh. It hurts so. If only you can come soon!"

"31st May.

"I have just passed two more terrible days. Consequently you have not heard from me. Just as I thought the worst was over, I was suddenly gripped with terrible pains. The Professor, who was fortunately in the neighbourhood, was summoned. I was pushed headlong into an examination room. At first, on the way, I groaned—

but when several strange ladies passed us I pulled myself together. I did not want to show weakness in front of strangers.

"During the examination my knees were clamped to the bed. I felt so miserable that I scarcely noticed what was happening to me. I only saw the Professor standing in front of the window, his back turned to me. 'Count,' he said, and then I became aware of the repellent odour of ether. It lasted longer than usual. I came to 37. When I awoke the doctors were there to put me to bed. Then I heard someone laugh. I had, in fact, called out: 'Where is the little ape?' I had dreamed that the little ape which belonged to the head doctor was sitting beside me and eating my salad.

"The next day, which was yesterday, the pains started again. Again the Professor had to be fetched; but this time there was no anæsthetic! I screamed terribly, and afterwards violently reproached myself for doing so. I saw from the Professor's expression that he was suffering with me; but I could not control myself. When it was over I was given a larger dose of morphia, but it was some time before it took proper effect. I noticed my thoughts were becoming confused. I heard myself groaning and screaming as if from a long distance, and always the same thing: 'Give me my clothes. I will jump off the cliff! I will not die in the clinic, to please the Professor.'

"Matron, and silent, pale Sister Hannah, sat beside my bed. I sensed their presence as if through a cloud, and felt that they wanted



LILI ELBE, COPENHAGEN, FEBRUARY 1931





to console and calm me. At last I cried myself off to sleep.

"When I awoke, I felt somewhat better. Then I discovered the tube was choked up. When the Professor was with me in the evening, I excused myself for my uncontrollable behaviour.

" 'Now, don't be too sensitive. I know you have had agonizing pains,' he said. 'Not on that account, Professor, but out of respect for you I am sorry that I misbehaved,' I said. Then he took my arm, patted it, and smiled down on me affably and soothingly. Everything I had suffered was obliterated and forgotten through this smile. You see, I am much better to-day, else I could not have written you such a long letter.

"Come soon. The Professor is also asking after you."

"1st June.

"Now progress is really rapid. I think the Professor's smile yesterday evening gave me new vitality. I keep recalling it. It was also high time, for it was a long time since he had smiled on me.

"Since the last operation he has always looked very stern. I do not think he is pleased with the poor progress I am making. I was very unfortunate ! He has certainly good reason to be stern. Perhaps it was a mask, as he is fighting for my life. There was not time for outward display of sympathy. Perhaps such emotions would have been too much for me.

"Now I feel that I am returning to life—

## MAN INTO WOMAN

although I am still lying with the tube inside me and my legs tightly bound.

"I shall never forget all that sister Ellen and sister Frieda have been to me during these dark days. They were my good fairies. They have a place in my heart.

"Little Ilse brings me fresh flowers from the garden every day. In the evening she or Sister Frieda sits with me. Then the gramophone plays. How music soothes my nerves !

"More than once it seemed as if the tube had got out of position ; but it was always pushed back. I long so much to be able to move my legs a little ! Moreover, I know that I shall not go out into the garden until everything is over. When the window is open and the scent of blossoms is streaming in, I long so terribly for my seat on the lawn under my beautiful magnolia tree.

"Thank you a thousand times for your letter."

"3rd June.

"Yesterday Teddybearkins was again with me. She was the purest sprite, laughing and relating stupidities. I had just had my breakfast. As I had a very poor appetite, she ate everything up in a twinkling. Then she sat on the window-seat, dangled her long, pretty legs out of the window, and smoked one cigarette after another. Suddenly we heard the folding door outside being opened. Like a flash she was out of the window. The next moment, the Professor, accompanied by Matron, entered the room.

"He certainly noticed the cigarette-smoke—he looked at me rather strangely. I could not, of course, utter a sound.

"'Look what an appetite Frau Lili has got now!' said Matron, beaming and pointing to the empty plates. They were scarcely outside the room before I heard a ringing laugh. Smoking in the rooms is strictly forbidden. But I surmised that out of sympathy with me, Matron explained to the Professor that I was not the sinner.

"Early this morning Teddybearkins was here again. And then I could take my revenge. She had brought her friend, the lady doctor, with her. Mrs. Teddybear then told us that she was once obliged to wait several hours for a consultation with the Professor. 'Here one learns to wait,' she had then said to the Professor. 'Yes, that is the first thing *I* teach young ladies,' the friend answered, quick as lightning. And then they both declared with one voice that it was really ludicrous to be afraid of the Professor, that my respect for him was too comical for words. He was the most amiable man; but a modern woman who was afraid of one man was a ridiculous creature. They had scarcely finished chaffing me before the door opened and the Professor was standing in the room. And both my modern champions of the sex withdrew blushing and almost panic-stricken. Not until long after the Professor had evacuated the field did they venture to put in an appearance. Teddybearkins was then very dejected. But the learned madam of the medical faculty again rode the high horse. 'That's the way to subjugate

## MAN INTO WOMAN

slave natures. It won't suit me.' 'But why did you not remain?' I asked with curiosity. 'I could not leave my poor little friend in the lurch !' For the first time I laughed heartily again. It really hurt me to do so. And Teddybearkins wore a very guilty expression.

"Shall I have a line from you to-morrow to tell me when you are coming?"

"4th June.

"I have got over everything now. The objectionable tube has been taken away. Early this morning. Suddenly the Professor came in—with Sister Margaret, who was carrying a tray with instruments. If I see instruments I have palpitations. But this time everything happened so quickly that I had scarcely time to think about it. In a few minutes everything was settled. I began to whimper with joy, like a foolish little girl. 'Does it still hurt?' asked the Professor. 'No, no—on the contrary.' Then he had to smile. 'If everything functions normally, you will have an injection,' he said shortly, and departed.

"When he returned two hours later, I was beaming with happiness. Everything had passed off normally.

" 'Now I am reassured,' he said. I saw that he was satisfied with me.

"I learned afterwards that all the nurses had worn very anxious expressions the whole day. If everything had not been in order after the removal of the tube, it would have been necessary to operate upon me again immediately,

and it was doubtful whether my strength would have proved adequate.

"What a wonderful feeling to be able to stretch one's legs again ! After lying still for so long my whole body still feels as if it were paralysed. But I am deliriously happy now, because I know that you will be with me in a few days. Perhaps by then I shall be out in the garden again. Oh, Grete, how beautiful life is ! And what a stroke of good fortune that I have been able to spend this lovely summer here ! And if there should be no second summer, I have had my fill of happiness. At least I shall have known what midsummer happiness is like !"

"5th June.

"I hasten to write you a few lines. It will be the last letter that can reach you before you leave Paris.

"To-day I was to try to get up ; but my legs would not support me. Sisters Frieda and Ellen had eventually to lift me out of bed and place me in the armchair. Still, it was lovely.

"The armchair is close to the window, and I can look out into the garden. They have promised to let me go out into the garden again in the morning.

"I really look very tired. I tell you this only so that you shouldn't have a fright when you see me again.

"To be able to sit under my magnolia tree again !

"There you will find me when you come here in three days' time—in my Garden of Eden."

## XVI

ONCE more Lili was lying in her chaise-longue outside in the park. It was now summer. Bees flew humming from flower to flower, and the birds were singing in the trees. The silver birches were now clad in their richest foliage, and when the wind rustled through them it seemed to Lili as though little bells tinkled.

Then someone called her name : "Lili !" And the next moment she was enfolded in Grete's arms.

Then followed days full of happiness and security. Grete came each morning early and watched over every step which Lili now began to take timidly upon the summery paths of the park. And Lili grew visibly better with every day that passed. Soon she could stroll through the park again, free from all pain and all fatigue. Then, arm in arm, like two affectionate sisters, the pair went on voyages of exploration into the town.

One evening, as she was entering the park with Grete, the Professor met her.

"I am quite well now, Professor. But . . ." She hesitated.

"Well ?"

"Could I not stay here a few months longer with you, in case you should want to operate upon me again ?"

He looked at her with a smile and shook his head. "No ; it is high time for you to go out into the world and try your wings."

The same evening Lili found a bird's nest. It was built under the roof of the covered passage which led from the Professor's private quarters to the clinic. A small family of sparrows. The father sparrow and the mother sparrow were twittering and the young sparrows were chirping. Perhaps a little family quarrel, thought Lili. Suddenly a young one fell out of the nest and remained lying help less on the path. It fluttered its embryo wings and tried to fly, but in vain. The wings were not strong enough to bear it. And the parents came hurrying out of the nest on to the path and hovered about their young one. Their twittering sounded a note of real terror. They could not get the youngster back into the nest. Then Lili stooped down, took the little bird in her hand, stroked it carefully, and felt the little heart beating against her hand. Suddenly the Matron was standing beside her.

"But why are you weeping, Frau Lili?"

Mutely Lili handed her the little bird. "It has fallen out of the nest and cannot yet fly. And the parents cannot help it. It makes me think of myself. I too cannot yet . . ."

She gave the Matron the bird, and the Matron fetched a ladder and laid the bird again in the nest among its parents and brothers and sisters.

The day of departure from Dresden passed off much more quietly than Grete had anticipated. When the Professor came to bid Lili farewell,



she said to him simply and calmly : "I owe you, Professor, not only my life, but also hope for the future, and all the confidence which I am now feeling. I will now try to plunge into the world outside—but if I am in need, may I come back?"

The Professor only pressed her hand. "Write and tell me where you are, how you are getting on, and what you are doing. And regularly. Tell me everything. And if you want my help, you will always find a refuge and friends here."

Lili bade farewell to the Matron and the other nurses. When they left the porch and she saw her luggage piled high on the car, she thought with relief how simply and naturally everything was now arranging itself, and how unpathetic and undramatic life was when seen in daylight. The day before, and also the whole night, she had been full of apprehension at this approaching moment of farewell ; full of fear and apprehension of life outside the sheltered clinic. Now, in the twinkling of an eye, she was sitting in the train with Grete on the journey to Berlin.

And only many, many months later did she realize what a harsh transition from the peace of the Women's Clinic to the outside world was the sojourn in Berlin. She understood subsequently why she had been sent out of her paradise on the Elbe into the noisiest of all cities that she had ever seen. For these Berlin days were intended to give her an opportunity to test herself, to prove her vitality and her capacity for living. She stayed in a hotel, quite close to the clinic in which she, as a man, had been lying a few months before. She felt no curiosity to revisit this place of transition,

as she subsequently called it. Nor had she any desire to visit the friends of that time. To move, to live, to gaze and wander unknown and anonymous among the millions of the giant city, to grow accustomed to the workaday rhythm of others, so that she could one day share in this rhythm herself—such was the deepest meaning of this Berlin sojourn.

She was not always accompanied by Grete on her strolls through the Tiergarten, through the museums and through the noisiest and most animated streets. She often wanted to be alone, thrown quite back on her own resources, in order to find her feet in the whirlpool of Berlin. For that was it—she must find her own feet, in order to demonstrate to herself that she would be able to go her own way when left to herself. Grete let her have her way. She was secretly glad at Lili's participation in the great and little things of the day, although she certainly suspected that Lili was having the hardest possible struggle with herself during these Berlin days.

So it was. There were days through which Lili dragged a tortured and lacerated heart, days when she was oppressed by numerous fears. It is so easy, she would then think, to bear one's anonymous fate here among utter strangers; but how would everything shape as soon as this anonymity ceased, as soon as she was obliged to appear in those circles whence Andreas has vanished, to which Andreas had belonged? She thought of her family in Denmark. Supposing she never returned there? Would that not be the simplest? Would it not be better for her the new creature without a past and thus without

a family, to renounce everything connected with Andreas? To renounce her friends and relations in Denmark? To renounce even the friends in Paris, in order to start a new life right from the beginning?

She surrendered herself to such thoughts with fanaticism, with an obstinacy that eventually suggested to her the question as to whether she ought not to part from Grete for ever, secretly, slipping away without a word? Or ought she to speak to Grete, to tell her in quiet, simple words that their ways must now part? But hardly had she addressed this question to herself than she shrank from the probe. Life and the world about her, everything would become empty and cold if she should renounce everything that once surrounded Andreas. Would it not even be cowardice, the confession of a guilty feeling, if she should break all the ties with the past—with the past of Andreas? Would not Grete become lonely if she should part from her for ever?

These days of futile questionings were followed by nights when Lili lay sleepless and pondered upon everything that had happened to her—to Grete—to Andreas. And the more intimately, the more longingly, the more ardently she let her thoughts wander through the corridors of the past, the more terrified she became. For she perceived that her whole mental life had been really obliterated from the day when she had been newly created in the city by the Elbe.

A horror came upon her when she saw her questions confronting her without answer, as if before a mist—a mist which became thicker and thicker

and eventually extinguished everything which had formerly been. Faces which Andreas had known faded away. A desert surrounded her, an empty waste wherein not even phantoms emerged from the past.

During such nights she felt close to madness ; she dared not confide all that she went through at this time to another person, not even to Grete. Only two names grew clearer and clearer in her present anguish. And to the names were attached two faces, one of which belonged to Claude, and the other to Feruzzi, the young Italian officer, who, an age ago, as she thought now, although it was really no more than a year, had been with them together in Rome. Feruzzi, with whom Grete felt some secret tie, as if instinctively imploring the protection of a man, without being conscious of it in her own mind and without even mentioning his name during these latter weeks. And the more ardently Lili conjured up in her heart the picture of the Italian friend, the more distinctly she felt his features mingling with the picture of Andreas.

All of a sudden it dawned upon her what a profound and strange secret was bound up with the vow which, on a far-off evening in Rome, when Andreas, Grete, and Feruzzi were sitting together, Andreas himself had taken : that Grete and Feruzzi should be united because they belonged to each other, and that Andreas should disappear.

One night Lili suddenly woke up, stole softly to Grete, and took her hand.

Grete was sleeping. She awoke in a fright and saw Lili beside her.

"Have I awakened you ?" asked Lili.

"Oh, I was having such a beautiful dream!" said Grete.

"Where were you in your dreams?" asked Lili.

Grete answered : "I think we were in Rome."

"And Feruzzi was with you, wasn't he?" asked Lili. Then Grete put her arm round Lili and Lili her arm round Grete. And neither spoke another word.

The next morning Lili wrote a short and calm note to Feruzzi :

"Dear Friend,

"I will only tell you that Andreas has kept his word. He is dead. I know that Grete has not yet told you anything about it. Write her and do not neglect her."

Underneath she signed her name, "Lili."

After about a week she returned to Dresden—to Lili's home. And again they went like two sisters through the park of the Women's Clinic, and the Professor rejoiced in them. Again they said farewell, and, at his behest, proceeded to a quiet woodland village in the Erzgebirge, stayed in a little hotel, lived in the society of other people who were strangers, and, like them, seeking a few weeks' convalescence. One day a letter came from Italy for Grete. Grete gave the letter to Lili to read. Feruzzi wrote to say that he was at the service of both of them, wherever they were and wherever he was, and that if they called he would come, and that his heart belonged to them both. Lili felt this day for the first time in her life as a woman that she had paid

off some of her debt to Grete and that she had bestowed some happiness upon two other persons. And then Grete learned what vow Andreas had sworn in Rome regarding himself and her and Feruzzi.

On this day Lili said : "Now I have made such progress that we can both go home."

"Home ?" asked Grete.

"I mean . . . Denmark, so that you may become free of a person who is long since dead, from Andreas, and so that both of us, you and I, can begin a new life."

A week later they were travelling northward.

## XVII

**I**N the sleeping-car bound for Copenhagen—Grete was lying in slumber most peaceful and profound—Lili suddenly awoke from a terrible nightmare. She did not know what she had dreamed, but it seemed to her as if she had been on the point of suffocation. Cautiously she opened the window. The ferry was in the midst of the sea. It was a grey, starless August night. And as she stared out, she saw a picture in her mind's eye. The chief railway station of Copenhagen full of people; and all crying out, "Lili Elbe !" and pointing at her. And a nameless horror gripped her. She could endure the sleeping-compartment no longer. She dressed, and in the semi-darkness found her fur cloak, which had been given her ages ago, in the early spring, in Berlin. She stole out of the car, and crept along the feebly illuminated gangway, up the damp steps of the ferry, and on deck. Not a person was to be seen ; everybody was asleep. The only sound that could be heard was the churning up of the water by the propeller. The mast lights were burning dim. The funnels of the steamer were spurting black smoke. From the refreshment-rooms of the ship came the reflection of electric light. A few passengers were sitting there. She leaned over for fear of meeting familiar faces, of being recognized by anybody here. Like one pursued

she crept out of the beam of light into a dark corner.

She shivered. "No, no," she moaned, "I cannot go to Copenhagen." And the vision she had seen in the sleeping-car below would not leave her. Her imagination painted the picture in colours ever more vivid, and eventually she kept hearing out of the rhythm of the pounding ship's engines the cry: "There she is! There she is! There she is! . . ."

Suddenly she heard footsteps. She dared not look up. She crouched closer in her corner. Like a black shadow she saw a man come striding by. His footsteps echoed right across the deck, died away, and then came closer, and then quite near. The man stopped just in front of her refuge, and struck a match in order to light a cigarette. The flare of the match cast a lurid light over the man's face. Involuntarily Lili had peered into the flame. She pressed both her hands before her mouth so as not to cry out. As if in a fever the thought throbbed in her: This man recognized you, and you know people. She shut her eyes; she seemed to be imploring the grey heavens above: "Let me die." And now it was this shriek of anguish which accompanied the rhythm of the engine like a perpetual cry: "Let me die! Let me die! Let me die! . . ."

When at last the man had vanished, and she was again standing quite alone at daybreak under the grey sky—a metallic reflection of the rising sun percolating through the dreary, leaden covering of cloud—this cry of anguish kept forming itself on her lips: "Let me die!" And, tired out, she dragged herself to the railing, so utterly tired that she could



scarcely keep herself upright. She stared down at the dark sea, glittering here and there, without hope, with unseeing eyes, too weak to resort to flight—flight from home, from herself, from nameless horror.

Quietly she crept back into the sleeping-car. Grete was sleeping soundly and had noticed nothing. Nor would she ever learn of the incident, Lili vowed. She undressed noiselessly, crept back into her bed, and shed helpless tears. When Grete awoke, Lili had exhausted herself with crying, and her face was rigid as a mask. Grete had to help her dress. The lights of Copenhagen were already twinkling. Grete caressed her companion and spoke words of consolation. Lili listened mutely and nodded, but could not get the nightmare picture out of her head: the railway station with the thousand pointing fingers: "There she is! There she is!"

But nobody at the vast railway station called out her name. Nor was anybody there to meet her. With her coat-collar turned up, and a thick veil round her hat, Lili made her entrance into Copenhagen. Helpless as a child, she clung to Grete the short distance across the platform and the flight of steps leading to the waiting-room. She dared not look up; she trembled violently whenever she passed a group of people, like a person who had committed a crime and thought she was being followed from all sides. The waiting-room had only a few occupants, and they sat down in its extreme corner. Grete had directed a porter to put their luggage in the cloakroom. Then one of Grete's cousins appeared. He was the only person whom



PORTRAIT OF THREE WOMEN (LILI IN CENTRE) BY GERDA WEGENER  
(GRETE SPARRE)



Grete had advised of their arrival. At Lili's request it had been arranged that they should meet in the waiting-room. Andreas had hardly known this cousin—Lili was afraid of the curious eyes of this semi-stranger—but the cousin greeted them very simply.

Believing that Grete and Lili would proceed at once to Lili's married sister, who lived in a suburb of Copenhagen, he had not booked rooms for them. Now, however, Lili suddenly refused to go to her sister. Andreas had last seen her two years before, and Lili had now neither the strength nor the courage to meet the sister who was only a year older than Andreas.

"Very well," declared Grete; "then I will see about an hotel," and went to the telephone. To every inquiry the same answer was returned. We are full up—no room available ! It was August, and Copenhagen was crowded with summer visitors. Lili lapsed into sheer despair. Eventually, after a dozen refusals had been received, an hotel was found which offered a little room on the top floor. A quarter of an hour later Lili was sitting in this room. The whole day she did not venture to go out, but in the evening, without asking Lili, Grete notified Lili's brother-in-law of their arrival.

He came at once to the hotel and wanted to take Lili with him.

"Give me just a few days longer. I must get used to the idea of seeing my sister again. I have not the strength yet ; I cannot see people—least of all Andreas' family," implored Lili, and all urging was in vain.

"I am afraid," Lili kept stammering "I am

so afraid of meeting again people who belonged to Andreas, who loved Andreas and whom he loved. It seems as if I have murdered him. I know what I am saying is absurd. But I feel as if I were proscribed or pursued. I would rather die."

Grete did not stir from Lili's bed that first night in Copenhagen. It was an endless night, full of perplexity. Nothing was left of the creature who had so confidently left the Women's Clinic. All sangfroid and all hope had forsaken her. "I must go back to the hospital, where I belong. There is no one elsewhere who loves me and takes me for what I am. I must go back to the white sisters and to the other women in the park, for whom I am no different from themselves—women who need help and are helped."

But she was not yet allowed to return to Dresden. She was not allowed to stay in the little room of the hotel. The next morning she was taken to—Andreas' sister.

## XVIII

MANY weeks later Lili recalled to herself her first encounter with Andreas' sister in the quiet villa by the Gentofte Lake. She began to keep a diary, in order to render an account of her activities and her new beginning of life. The first shocks of her week at Copenhagen were a thing of the past. She had again found peace and even a certain gaiety. She had even had strength to read through the notes which Andreas' friend in Berlin had made rather less than six months before, at the time when Andreas related the story of his life to his friend throughout a night. Her sister's son, a young medical student, had encouraged her to start making her own notes. "You would render a service," he said, "to yourself and many other people if you would now record your thoughts and feelings, just at this time when you want to prepare for serious creative work." Also the Professor, her distant helper, had advised her to try to write down a record of her life and experience.

Grete was not living with her. She had taken up quarters with acquaintances in the town, as nobody in Copenhagen was supposed for the present to know of Lili's presence or even to be aware of her existence. Consequently, Grete told everybody who asked after Andreas that he lay seriously ill in a German hospital . . . and she visited her

friends only now and then in secret. Nor would Lili have it otherwise. She hardly dared do more herself than leave the garden in the evening, heavily veiled, with her nephew, to take walks in the neighbourhood under his protection. So far her sole occupation in Copenhagen had been to help Grete to regain her freedom. It was imperative to prevent the least rumour becoming public, and to proceed with all possible discretion in the effort to dissolve Grete's marriage with Andreas. It was a difficult undertaking, the outcome of which was by no means certain : no law as yet existed which could be invoked to meet such a fantastic case. For as one of the spouses, Andreas, no longer existed, how then could a marriage between a husband who no longer existed and his wife be dissolved ? And yet it was precisely to this "normal divorce law" which both the lawyers instructed, and the body of judges to whom the case was assigned for settlement appealed as the sole juridical criterion. This law required that for the period of one year prior to divorce a separation should be enforced, and after the expiration of this year a further year must elapse before the marriage could be absolutely dissolved. In this way Grete would lose two further years. Lili could not endure this thought. She would not have Grete swindled out of two years of her life. And as it seemed that the lawyers could find no other way out of the difficulty, Lili contemplated the drastic step of liberating Grete from the burden of a marriage tie with one who in the eyes of the law was a dead man by her own voluntary death. Then they were assisted by a suggestion from an

eminent lawyer that they should address a petition to the King, praying him to declare invalid, by an act of grace, the marriage once contracted by Grete and Andreas. The petition was delivered at the end of August, and by the end of September Grete and Lili were summoned to appear personally at the hearing. When Grete inquired whether Lili was strong enough to accompany her thence, she declared, beaming with joy: "If I can give you your freedom with so little sacrifice, do you believe that I would think of myself even for a moment?" And this journey to Court was the first common excursion which Grete and Lili undertook. Two ladies appeared before the judges. None but their two lawyers were present. The hearing took place in strict secrecy. The whole proceedings lasted barely half an hour. Lili shrank from describing them, even from recording them. Nor did Grete ever refer to them. And a few days later, on the 6th October, they were apprised of the King's decree, which declared invalid the marriage concluded between Andreas and Grete.

Shortly before this Lili had left her sister's villa and found a retreat in a couple of attics in the house of an acquaintance.

They were, indeed, very modest attics, in which she led her quiet life as long as she stayed in Copenhagen—as long as she stayed in Denmark, and where she found the necessary composure to put into practice the suggestion made by the son of Andreas' sister: to begin her Copenhagen diary.

On the 10th October she began. The first incident she recorded was her meeting with Andrea's sister.



“When on the second day of my stay in Copenhagen I went out to see Andreas’ sister—now I know and feel that I may also call her my sister—I entered a room which I did not know, but in which Andreas had often been before. When I opened the door no one was in the room, and when I took the first step I saw my reflection in a mirror on the wall : a big, elegant woman with smiling eyes, with rouged lips, with fresh cheeks, was staring at me. I was satisfied with my reflection. I knew that I had done everything to make myself as handsome as possible. In my own justification. Who could reproach me for resorting to all the beautifying arts to which every woman has a claim. If I should ever paint myself, I would like to retain this moment on canvas. Scarcely had I regarded my own person than I saw behind me another picture, enclosed by the same mirror. A large fjord landscape bathed in sunlight with luxuriant vegetation on both banks. My heart stopped beating. I turned round ; I stared at the landscape in the heavy gilt frame on the wall. It was a picture which the young Andreas had painted of his home. I looked round the room to see if anybody was observing me. I saw on all walls of the room pictures of landscapes, towns, streams. I recognized them all as Andreas’ pictures. I saw all his travels before me. There was the town in Southern France on the Loire, where Andreas and Grete had spent many joyous summer months. And not only Andreas ! No, I, Lili, had also lived down there, like a prisoner escaped from the captivity

of Andreas' body. There was the bridge over the Seine in Paris under the threatening sky. Andreas had stood on this bridge . . . had peered down at the river and wrestled with thoughts of death. And pictures by Grete hung beside them. One of them showed me Lili, enticed out of Andreas, in woman's clothes. I approached the picture and could not help stroking it, while tears ran down my cheeks. And I sat down on a chair in front of the table. A big album was lying there. Involuntarily I opened it and turned over the pages. I found the pictures of a fair boy with large blue eyes . . . pictures of Andreas when he was still a child, innocently happy with his two brothers and his sister.

"Then the door opened and a lady with dark hair and blue eyes and trembling arms entered the room : Andreas' sister. I rose to my feet and stood in front of her. And my sister had to look up to me, for I was bigger than she. Then an absurd recollection flashed through me : Andreas and his sister had been the same size. From my sister's eyes I saw that she was thinking the same thing, and did not know what to make of the idea. I said to her : 'Good day . . . be kind to your sister Lili.'

"Perhaps I should have said something altogether different. I might have said : 'Be kind to me and love me as you loved Andreas.' Perhaps I might have said nothing at all. Or perhaps I might have only smiled and said to her : 'Do not be surprised because I am bigger than our dead brother Andreas, for I wear ever so high heels. And don't take this amiss, because

I want to be as pretty and ladylike as all other well-groomed women.'

"Then we sat together on the sofa and in front of us lying on the table was the album with the portraits of Andreas as a child. For a long time we held hands. And my sister was kind ; she sought for words. Her eyes looked at me her lips said something. And I did not know whether it was her lips or her eyes which spoke to me : 'Don't be angry with me if I cannot yet properly call you by your name of Lili . . if I cannot yet arrange my ideas about you . . if I only seek for Andreas when I look at you in your eyes, at your mouth, at your hands, and at your forehead. For I loved Andreas' eyes and his forehead so much. I kissed his forehead so often. You know that, or don't you know it? But Andreas knew it. For I am only a year older than Andreas. And when Andreas and I were quite small, he five and I six years old, I was his little mother. There was never a prettier, sweeter brother than he. He played with my dolls, he pushed my doll's pram. And I called him "Lilleman"—little man. Once when I wrote down the name for Mother and Mother told me that I had spelt "Lilleman" with only one "n" instead of two, I said that my brudderkins Andreas was only a "Lilleman" with one "n", for he was not a proper man at all. Mother smiled, and you too smiled when you heard it—no . . . not you . . . Andreas smiled. He did not know, perhaps, why he laughed. And I did not know why I had said that my Andreas was not a proper man at all. And do you still

remember how we used to push our doll's pram in the woods? Andreas was so fond of pushing the little pram. But he was afraid that others would see him and chaff him about it. And do you remember how I would then place my hands over Andreas' little white hands? And do you know why I did that? Andreas never knew why, but I can tell you now. I did it only in order that if we were surprised by anybody, I alone could continue pushing the pram, while Andreas could quickly remove his hands from the handle, as if nothing had happened.' And if my sister did not say this with her lips, she said it with her eyes. But it was no doubt her lips. I only nodded, and kept nodding. I did not weep. I took it quite calmly that for many, many days long she was seeking in me with her large, troubled, woman's eyes only the picture of Andreas, her little brother, and, as I now believe, found it. Sometimes, in the first days, when we conversed with each other frequently with very painful feelings for many hours, she addressed me as Andreas. I felt then as if I ought to die. Nor could I conceal this from her. And then I would implore her to believe me that I was not Andreas' murderer, that if Andreas had not died, I should have had to go under with him, and that if I was living now, I owed him every day of my life. Once I said that I really had neither parents nor brothers and sisters, as I was born not up here in the North, but down in Germany. And perhaps if mother had bore me as a girl, she would not have loved me so much as she loved Andreas. It was probably on this

day that my sister said to me that everything that had happened in Dresden was an outrage against Nature; had been a gamble with Fate; questioning whether Andreas could not really have survived; or whether it would not have been far better for Andreas to have borne his heavy fate and his tortured body to the bitter end. Then she showed me all the works which she had collected of Andreas, and I perceived that her whole home was really a museum for Andreas, for all the walls of her room were crowded with Andreas' pictures. 'Don't you see,' said my sister, 'what an artist we have lost in him—how different he was from you?' 'Yes,' I said; 'that only goes to prove how right Andreas was to release me, for we were two beings, Andreas and I. I know that as a person I am far inferior to him, that I shall never be able to achieve what he achieved, that I shall never be able to paint . . . that I don't even want to paint. For if I did so I could never approach his standard. But just because of this you can see that the beings who inhabited the body which Mother bore were really two beings. I have exchanged so much for this life which I must now live alone, as you yourself say that Andreas was so much stronger and more capable than I. He lived and worked during a long life, and I dare hardly show myself. And if I show myself, you all call me a joke, a deception, a masquerade. Let us, I beg you, be friends and good sisters for the sake of our dead brother Andreas.'

"Then there was the day on which she said: 'Lili, perhaps no wrong has been done. It was

certainly the will of Andreas that everything should happen as it ought to happen. He was always chivalrous. And hence he released you, and withdrew his life for yours.'

"It was a terribly hard contest between my sister and me for my recognition as a person, as a sister. And I know how unspeakably hard she found it to believe in me as her sister Lili and to receive me, though it were only out of compassion. I did not make it easy for her, for whenever I showed myself, by my character and by the way in which I spoke, in which I moved, in which I thought, I veiled completely the character of Andreas. He was ingenious, sagacious, and interested in everything—a reflective and thoughtful man. And I was quite superficial. Deliberately so. For I had to demonstrate every day that I was a different creature from him, that I was a woman. A thoughtless, flighty, very superficially minded woman, fond of dress and fond of enjoyment, yes, I believe even childish. And I can say it calmly now: all this was certainly not merely farcical acting. It was really my character, untroubled, carefree, illogical, capricious.

"During the weeks I spent in my sister's house I could not overcome my shyness of people and the melancholy which oppressed me so here in Copenhagen. For I noticed, when I regarded myself of an evening alone in my bedroom, I would look tired, done up, and impossible. And I felt that everybody in Copenhagen, even my family, regarded me as a phenomenon. To be sure, people gradually got used to me,

were kind to me, and let me have my own way. They tried to persuade me that I need have no fear about my appearance, as I looked like every other woman. Nevertheless, I was assailed by a deadly fear if I left the garden with my sister's son for a short walk. The tiniest smudge on the face intimidated me at that time so much that I would only sally forth with him heavily veiled. I felt like a pariah. Other women could be ugly, could commit every possible crime. I, however, must be beautiful, must be immaculate, else I lost every right to be a woman. Else I should have dishonoured him who had created me, Werner Kreutz. There were days on which I did not want to leave my room, when I felt pursued by everybody in Copenhagen. All the feeling of security and freedom which had been mine in the clinic in Dresden and also in Berlin completely left me here. And it was so difficult to write to the Professor. However much I wanted to, I could not bring myself to write him, as he would only see in me a despondent, helpless, hopeless person."

From the day on which Lili rented her attic in the town, her courage began to rise again. Grete was free, and could begin a new life. Lili, was the first to telegraph this glad news to Feruzzii their friend in Italy. And it was Lili, too, who urged Grete to journey south to join their friend as quickly as she could. Grete smiled. She knew Lili better ; she knew that Lili still needed her here. For Lili would have to mix with people and eventually overcome her timidity in the world. So very

gradually Grete initiated her most intimate friends into the secret of Lili's existence, brought Lili into contact with them, until Lili felt sufficiently tranquil to take her first walk through the streets of Copenhagen. Nobody recognized her. She even ventured with a number of friends, who immediately accepted her for what she was, as a woman, into cafés and restaurants. She went alone into shops to make purchases, and eventually visited a hairdresser's. And when her friend Inger arrived one day from Berlin, Lili seemed to have quite overcome the serious emotional crisis through which she had been obliged to pass in Copenhagen. Inger, who had not seen Lili since the first operation in Berlin, was delighted at her friend's appearance. They spent a few carefree, joyous, undisturbed days with each other. They shopped together, visited dressmakers, went on walks and excursions, and finally Lili even ventured with her friend along the "Strog", Copenhagen's Oxford Street. No, she need no longer have any fear; nobody saw anything unusual in her; her anonymity in Copenhagen seemed to be secured from all dangers. When, therefore, strolling arm-in-arm with Inger along the Rathausplatz she saw two of Andreas' studio comrades approaching, without being recognized by them, and when she heard one whispering to the other: "By Jove, what a fine pair of legs!" meaning Lili's legs, she swallowed the remark with avidity, not only as a compliment, but as a hundred per cent recognition of her identity as a woman.

Only one thing troubled her rather more than she liked. In contrast to Grete's and Andreas'



women friends, who had long since accepted Lili as one of themselves, with few exceptions, all the male friends of Andreas avoided Lili. Grete, who had expected help and sympathy for Lili from them most of all, and in this belief had revealed Lili's existence to them, was very distressed over this failure on the part of Andreas' friends, all the more so as just at that time the whole secret of Andreas and Lili was divulged in Copenhagen through the indiscretion of a Parisian woman friend and eventually published in unreserved fashion by an organ of the Press. Lili learned of this by accident. All her gaiety vanished again. For many days she would not stir out of her attic. She paid no heed to anything, and could not understand why none of Andreas' friends found their way to her. A little entry in her diary tells of this :

“How is it possible that all Andreas' friends here have left me in the lurch? That they all avoid me as if I were a pariah? What have I done to them? Andreas was always ready to help them. He was always a reliable friend. And now one of them says that just because he esteemed Andreas so highly he could never recognize Lili. Lili would always stand between him and Andreas. He would shudder at offering her his hand. This sentiment is nothing but an eruption of overweening masculinity. And another excuses himself with other subterfuges. One could not be seen walking with Lili in the streets without compromising himself. Copenhagen was too small to show oneself publicly with such a pitiful creature, unmolested and unsuspected.”

Lili herself never read the lurid article which a sensational journalist had published concerning Andreas and her, but the appearance of this article sufficed to clinch her determination to leave Copenhagen as quickly as possible. Now she knew that in Copenhagen she was outlawed. And panic-stricken she left the city. She would have preferred to return to Germany immediately ; but one of Andreas' brothers in Vejle, their native place in Jutland, implored her to visit him, if only for a few days. He was ready to accept and cherish her as a sister, and assured her that she could always find a home and peace and quiet with him. Lili went to him. She carried out this resolve as if in a dream. "Yes, go," her sister and everybody who had Lili's good at heart had said, "go back again to our little home town. Perhaps you will there recover your equilibrium. And if later on you should want to return to your helper in Germany, then do so. But first recover your gaiety and yourself."

A few days before this Grete had left for the South—for Italy.

## XIX

**L**ILI'S brother and sister-in-law inhabited a villa facing a little fjord town in Jutland. Here she could live undisturbed by curious glances.

She was received most cordially, especially by her sister-in-law, a dear good creature who as a woman showed Lili not only sympathy, but profound understanding from the first moment.

The brother did not find it easy the first few days to adjust himself to his new sister, but it was not long before he was quite at home with her and could regard Lili simply as a sister.

Brother and sister-in-law vied with each other to give Lili a peaceful and happy time during her stay in Andreas' home town.

She was quite content to be treated as a child who had been ill and must now be cherished and cosseted. Every evening her sister-in-law sat beside Lili's bed and held her hand until she fell asleep. She was never left alone the whole day. If she went out, someone went with her. If Lili protested, they would hardly let her speak : even in little towns there were wicked people, and mad dogs, or other dangers. . . .

In these quiet and safe surroundings her nerves got better. She took long walks in the neighbourhood of the town, along the fjord and into the great



ELBE, DRESDEN, 1931 (AFTER THE OPERATION)



forests which were now glorious in their autumn colours.

Here by the fjord and in the adjacent woods Andreas had passed the happiest days of his childhood. But nearly all recollections of this had been extinguished in Lili. Everything seemed new to her, as if she saw it for the first time. Only now and then, in a particular light, prompted by a sound or a scent, would a far-off memory be kindled in her, as if through a haze. But it was never anything exact that stirred in her.

One day her brother went with her into the town, to show her the old parental house in which Andreas had been born and nurtured and their parents had lived until their death.

Lili stood in front of the old house of her parents ; she recognized it, remotely and hazily, like something of which one had once dreamed. Her brother frequently asked her if she could not remember this or that incident from common childhood. The brother was only a few years older than Andreas. And it had always been Andreas who had remembered all the incidents of the past more clearly than anyone else. But Lili was always obliged to answer in the negative, however hard she tried to conjure up pictures from Andreas' past. She always had such a strange feeling, as if something were vibrating in the depths of her being. But she was still too weak to form a precise idea of what it was. Frequently these questions tortured her, and her brother felt it and desisted.

It was not through the past that she felt herself linked to her brother and sister-in-law ; but both

were so kind and considerate that she gradually felt quite at home with them.

"Lili," her brother said one day, "you have now been here almost a whole month and you have not yet visited Father's and Mother's grave in the old churchyard."

"I should so much like to go there," she answered, "but you must show me where they are buried." Then she burst into tears.

Her brother regarded her with surprise. He took her hands and drew her to him protectively.

Lili divined what he was thinking.

"Yes," she said, tormented by a secret fear, "I know I have had neither father nor mother. I am really quite alone in the world, and often think that life is too full of dangers to be able to master it alone. Just for me. You must understand that. My life began amidst terrible pain, and sometimes I fear that everything has been in vain. But then again it seems as if something great and strong has sustained me. Then I feel something precious stirring within me. It may be happiness. In my dreams this happiness is perfect."

Her brother gazed at her with inquiring eyes. Lili patted his shoulder. "Dear brother, perhaps you cannot understand me when I talk like that; but that does not matter, so long as you are kind to me. Often I do not understand it myself; I do not understand my own life; I can never get over my astonishment."

. . . . .

Andreas Sparre was dead.

. . . . .

Lili was again living in her Copenhagen attic.

Here she was introduced by her hostess to a young Norwegian veterinary surgeon, who, without knowing what had happened to her, told her that he had been experimenting for a long time with the transplantation and grafting of ovaries upon animals and explained how the effect of these new ovaries was so great as to change completely the animal's character and determined its age. And inasmuch as animals were less valuable subjects than human beings, he had more opportunity as a veterinary surgeon to study this phenomenon by experiments than other doctors. It went without saying that similar processes would be observed in the case of human beings.

Lili now realized that the crisis through which she had passed, especially when she was first in Denmark, and from the effects of which she was still suffering, was a natural consequence of the implantation which had been carried out upon her. She perceived how her whole cerebral function had received a new direction.

She confided all this to her diary :

"In the first months after my operation it was necessary above all else to recuperate. When this had happened to some extent, the physical change in me began. My breasts formed, my hips changed and became softer and rounder. And at the same time other forces began to stir in my brain and to choke whatever remnants of Andreas still remained there. A new emotional life was arising within me."



At that time she wrote a letter to Werner Kreutz :

“I feel so changed that it seems as if you had operated not upon my body, but upon my brain. And although my face still bears traces of what I have gone through, I feel I am getting younger and younger every day.

“Even the name of Andreas Sparre has no longer a bitter sound for me. He first had his youth, but now I believe that I am going to have mine. And sometimes I find it is unjust for me to retain his age and birthday, for my biological age is quite different from his. And it is also painful for me that his name instead of my name is on the official records. Andreas and I have really nothing whatever to do with each other.

“I have now been a few weeks in his birth-place, but I have felt like a stranger there all the time. Nothing of what is now stirring in me was born in his parents’ house. I am newly created. I was born under your auspices in Dresden, and my birthday is that April day on which you operated upon me. My temperament, too, is like April weather. I laugh and cry at the same time. My heart is full of expectation as a spring day. And every time I feel stirring within me this new life and this new youth, as if I were mother and child at the same time, then all my thoughts turn towards you in boundless gratitude.”

A few days later Lili filled many pages in her diary :

"I know that only doctors can understand me when I speak of the question of my age. And a number of doctors have even promised to help me if I should later attempt to cut loose from Andreas in this respect, so that I am given an age that corresponds to my physical development as a woman. Others may ridicule this question or regard it with indifference; the important thing, in their view, is that one feels young and gives a youthful impression. I, on the other hand, believe just the contrary—that one is, in fact, actually as old as the official papers state, whether one feels young or old. Yesterday I discussed this question with a friend, who is a lawyer, and said to him :

" 'Don't forget : every time one books a room in an hotel, fills up a census paper, applies for a situation, or marries, one must always answer questions about age.'

"And what did he say? He replied that I must not be so immodest. I must take over Andreas' age as a heritage, just as I have inherited all his rights. Which I vigorously contested. 'Assume, for the sake of argument,' I said, 'that I have some talent for painting and now began to paint like him. Andreas had his contacts as painter. He had exhibited in a number of salons in Paris and elsewhere, and was a member of several of them. Can you imagine my running to the various exhibitions committees who knew him and there telling my fantastic story to the best of my ability, in order to claim whatever rights Andreas had? Both the French and the Danish colleagues of

Andreas would regard me as crazy if I should maintain that I was one and the same person as Andreas. At least I should be regarded as an improbable phenomenon and ridiculed accordingly.

"No, if I should really paint I would have to build up my career right from the start, as otherwise I should make myself a laughing-stock.

"And can you see me—Lili Elbe—claiming the distinction which Andreas Sparre received from the French state as a painter? Can you imagine me decorating myself with it? No, I revere the memory of Andreas too much for this.

"I know very well that I am only a stupid female and a mere nobody.

"And, moreover, I am well aware that when one inherits, it always means that one enters upon the heritage with all its assets and liabilities, and for this reason one can even refuse to accept an inheritance. I lay no claim to Andreas' heritage, least of all to his birthday, for his birthday signifies for me nothing but a liability. I cannot be forcibly compelled to take over this heritage. I will not drag Andreas' age along with me like a burden, as I fear that just this very circumstance might be disastrous for my future. You have only to look at me to see that I lack all the assurance which Andreas possessed. My next-of-kin, that is, Andreas' relatives, tell me every day how altogether different I am in character from Andreas. He was planted so firmly upon the earth. He could withstand

storms. I feel like a young ingrafted tree which can be uprooted with the first gust of wind.

"I must now try to devise a livelihood, to undertake something, to earn money for my support. And this is just where age comes in. Once a person secures a position, then it all depends upon how one feels and how one carries out the duties attaching to such position ; but if a person has to begin right at the beginning, then everybody asks, especially if the subject be a woman, how old she is. And almost everywhere young people are preferred because it is thought that the future is theirs and that they possess possibilities of development. This applies not only to artists, but to all vocations.

"I admit that my case is absolutely unusual, unique. But cannot you understand how wrong it is to insert my name instead of Andreas' name on the baptismal certificate? My name, Lili Elbe, whom neither Andreas' father nor mother knew. And now, legally speaking, it is really as if Andreas had never existed.

"But that is, of course, nonsense, sheer nonsense, as a large number of paintings bear the name of Andreas. You can find his pictures in many galleries and art collections here. Andreas published books which bear his name. Consequently, I think it was wrong simply to cross his name out of the register and to insert mine in its place."

"And what did the lawyer answer ?

"In that case I must regard the name of Andreas, to some extent, as my pseudonym.

"'No,' I retorted, 'that would be wrong,

as I have nothing whatever to do with Andreas' pictures. They were created by Andreas. And it is just his pictures that are his absolute property. As a painter he was no dual personality. When he painted, he was an entire man, and strangely enough, until his last breath.'

"My friend then inquired whether I had never felt any desire to paint like Andreas, whose art had been the most characteristic thing about him.

"'No,' I replied, 'I have not the slightest desire to paint. Not because I still feel too weak and tired. No ; but it grows more apparent to me every day how little, in contrast with him, I see with a painter's eyes. I have no desire to continue his work. My life must go its own way. I do not mean by this that I am no artist. Perhaps I am an artist. Anyhow, I believe most emphatically that I shall find another outlet for my artistic impulses, that is, for the desire to shape something. But I cannot say anything definite about this now, as I am still quite in the dark.'

"We were strolling through the grounds of Bernstorff Castle. It was a dreary December day, and my friend asked me whether I had lost all that feeling for Nature which inspired Andreas.

"'No,' I said ; 'only whatever I look at now no longer suggests a subject for a picture. I am not "possessed" by a landscape, by a mood of Nature. If I see anything really beautiful, I feel as if my subconscious mind were absorbing it. More than this I do not know. Perhaps one

day I shall be able to give a visible-audible expression to all this, in some artistic form, whether it be painting, or music, or prose, or something else. At the moment I find my greatest release in music. But when I grow introspective I seem to myself to be like a boat with all sails spread which drifts at the mercy of every current of the wind. For, indeed, I am still so very new. I must first have time to find myself. How old am I in reality? Perhaps the doctors can say. My age has nothing whatever to do with the age of Andreas, as I did not share flesh and blood with Andreas from the beginning. It was Andreas who possessed supremacy over this body for almost a lifetime. And it was only later that I developed in our common body, so that this body evolved until there was no longer any room for Andreas.'

"However puzzling all this may sound to others, this is exactly how the matter stands, and, for this reason, I think that the name of Andreas ought to remain in the register of the church where he was baptised, and that papers ought to be issued for me, who has no home and no country, giving my biological age.'

"My friend parted from me, shaking his head. And this head-shaking was what I encountered from most people.

## XX

**T**HE many weeks which Lili now passed in her attic, far from Grete, were weeks of recuperation.

It was her short life which, looking round and looking back, she confided to the pages of her diary. Since the journey from Berlin to Dresden everything had come back to her again, vividly illuminated by a remarkable light which cast no shadows.

It was a confession which she poured out without restraint and without mercy on herself.

“I feel like a bridge-builder. But it is a strange bridge that I am building. I stand on one of the banks, which is the present day. There I have driven in the first pile. And I must build it clear across to the other bank, which often I cannot see at all and sometimes only vaguely, and now and then in a dream. And then I often do not know whether the other bank is the past or the future. Frequently the question plagues me: Have I had only a past, or have I had no past at all? Or have I only a future without a past?”

“I have found a new friend who wants to help me to collect and collate the loose leaves of my confession. Many years ago he knew Andreas

slightly. He can hardly recall him now. He can remember his eyes, and in my eyes he has found this recollection. He is a German, and I am glad of the chance of talking German with him here.

"He told me that when I went to see him for the first time, before I entered the room, he felt somewhat afraid of me, as if he might perhaps feel a repugnance towards me, especially as shortly before he had again glanced at some photographs of Andreas. When I was in his presence, so he told me, every doubt was dissipated, every doubt of my proper existence. He only saw the woman in me, and when he thought of Andreas, or spoke to me about Andreas, he saw and felt a person beside me or behind me.

"He gave me a new German translation of the Bible. The first volume. *The Book of the Beginning*, was the title, and I read in it many times the words :

"And the earth was without form, and void ; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.

"Is it presumptuous of me, whenever I think of my beginning, always to hear these words, the music of this verse, sounding in my ears ?

"I often give the loose leaves of my diary to my German friend to read. I ask him to tell me whenever I am obscure, and then a word from him encourages me to proceed. He understands my strange feeling about building this bridge in the dark.



"Grete has returned from Italy. She is radiantly happy, and I rejoice in her happiness

"She is now living with me, as we need no longer be afraid of going out together. I am not nervous any more. No one takes any notice of me in the streets.

"We talked through many long nights. We talked nearly always of the life that was now coming for her and for me. She was also able to help me out of the difficulties which I encountered so often when writing down my confessions. She always knew the answer.

"She talked a lot about Feruzzi. They wanted to marry without delay, and Grete said that her home would then always be my home. Feruzzi knew everything and said that he would always be my friend and protector. And Grete declared that we were so closely bound together that she could not imagine herself away from me for long.

"She kept speaking to me in this strain. Then she would say laughingly that I was not only her sister, but also her big grown-up daughter. I had to promise her that I would go to her and Feruzzi soon after their marriage. Feruzzi, too, would welcome me like a grown-up daughter. How happy these words made me!"

A well-known Copenhagen art dealer, who was an old friend of Grete and Andreas and one of the few who had welcomed Lili, suggested that he should arrange an exhibition of the pictures which Andreas had left.

With the assistance of Grete he brought the

whole collection of forty pictures from Paris to Copenhagen, and also many of Grete's pictures.

But Lili, who had arranged the exhibition together with Grete, was advised in no circumstances to show herself at the opening of the exhibition. The strictest secrecy was observed towards the newspapers as to the character of the exhibition. To avoid gossip, it was given out that the main object of the exhibition was to raise funds, through the sale of Andreas' latest pictures, to defray the cost of his long illness in a German hospital.

Invitations were despatched to the opening of the exhibition.

This exhibition was not calculated to excite surprise, as Andreas and Grete had exhibited in Copenhagen nearly every year, and, in fact, in the salons of this friendly art dealer.

On this occasion a strange feeling of suppressed curiosity pervaded the atmosphere on the opening day. The most intimate friends of the artist were, of course, initiated into the secret. But many others, who also made their appearance on this occasion, had heard of the rumours that had long been current in Copenhagen. And all these rumours, however frequently they had been contradicted, cropped up again phantom-like. Nobody ventured to buy a single picture.

Lili's resources melted away. She was depressed at the thought that she might be compelled to accept assistance from her relatives, however gladly they would have offered it to her. A suggestion was made that she should consent to the publication of the autobiographical sketches, her

"life's confession", which she had not yet completed ; but she rejected this proposal with something like horror.

An acquaintance then hit upon the absurd idea that Lili should impersonate Andreas and give the lie to all the rumours by making her appearance at the exhibition in this manner.

Grete was no less horrified at this idea than Lili. Then a friend who was on the staff of a leading Copenhagen newspaper came to Lili's assistance.

She had long been wanting to write a descriptive article dealing with Lili's metamorphosis. Lili had hitherto vetoed the suggestion. But now, the friend explained, the time had arrived when the public ought to learn the real truth. Such a well-known artist as Andreas simply could not just disappear. Consequently, it was only natural that the most fantastic rumours should be circulating in Copenhagen, especially as Andreas had so mysteriously disappeared from existence for nearly a year. And now she was resolved to relate in her newspaper the manner in which a gifted German surgeon had transformed the mortally ill Andreas Sparre into a glowing young woman, into Lili Elbe. The achievement of the German surgeon must be broadcasted to the world. It must not be allowed to remain a secret. It must be divulged one day, and now was the appropriate time.

With a heavy heart, persuaded by Grete and all her friends, Lili at length consented.

The next day, the beginning of March 1931, the article appeared and cleared the Copenhagen

atmosphere. Like lightning the news flashed through the world press. Everywhere in Europe and America this extraordinary human fate was discussed. But despite the fact that Lili had now become a world celebrity, and the newspapers in all languages broadcasted her portrait everywhere, she went about Copenhagen more peaceably than ever. Her constant fear, that people would shout her name after her in the street, did not materialize.

With the exception of the few who knew her, no one imagined for an instant that the young lady who strolled almost daily along the "Strög", and differed in no respect from other ladies, was the legendary Lili Elbe. A few days after the publication of the first article about her, she happened to be standing among a group of people in front of the entrance of a publishing house, where an illustrated article about her had just appeared in a weekly magazine, in order to buy a copy of this periodical. Then she sat down in a tram and read her own story just like many of the others who were sitting in the car. Nobody took any notice of her, although she was wearing the same coat and the same hat as in the photographs which illustrated the article.

After this "success" she was quite reassured and henceforth had various amusing experiences.

She went daily to Andreas' exhibition, which was now thronged by people who hoped to catch a glimpse of Lili Elbe. And nearly all the pictures were sold, without a single one of the visitors having recognized her.

Once an old lady even came up to her and whispered: "Tell me, miss, don't you think that

the lady over there with the large feet and the neck-tie, who looks like a man, is Lili Elbe?"

"Yes," answered Lili, "most decidedly that is she."

Another day, when she was sitting in a manicure saloon, a Swedish lady entered and exclaimed :

"Have you heard the story of Lili Elbe? Do you really believe there is anything in it?"

Everybody in the saloon explained that however fantastic it all sounded, it was perfectly true. Only Lili, who had for weeks been one of the regular attendants at the saloon, played the part of the sceptic.

"This article is, of course, exaggerated," she observed dryly. Whereupon all the ladies agreed that all newspapers exaggerated something terribly.

Lili's state of health improved considerably. Her nerves were soothed. Now she need no longer hide herself from people.

Her legitimation papers were now in order. By royal sanction she was permitted to use her name without challenge. The exhibition had been a success, and she herself received many proofs of sympathy, especially from women. Women whom she did not know in the least sent her letters full of comprehension and enthusiasm. Flowers were sent her by unknown admirers. Various doctors offered to attend her without payment so long as she remained in Copenhagen and to supervise her state of health.

"People are making me a heroine," she said

to her friends. She breathed again and began to enjoy life.

And a few weeks later Grete could again leave for the South with an easy conscience, to celebrate her marriage with Feruzzi.

## XXI

**D**URING these short weeks which she spent with Grete in Copenhagen, Lili knew for the first time what it was like to be in the company of a happy woman who was in love.

And now, when Grete had left her alone, Lili felt a secret sorrow, a restrained grief, almost a feeling of envy—but no, it could not be envy, for she knew that no one more deeply wished Grete to be happy than she.

At length it dawned upon her that what was affecting her so painfully was a void in her life, something unfulfilled that in all probability never could be fulfilled.

All this she felt vaguely, and yet she feared to give a name to this new thing that was stirring within her.

Spring was now advancing. The garden of the house in which her attic was situated was quivering with tender green : Lili felt her body thriving. But she also felt how this mysterious craving within her for something to which she could give no name became ever more clamant and insistent.

She began to work more and more strenuously, as if she had no time to lose. All through the night she would fill pages as she wrote down her confessions. She allowed herself only a few hours'

sleep. In the daytime she would sit at the piano and play for hours. Then she would sit sewing new clothes, or lend a hand with the work of the house. Her evenings she spent with relatives and friends. She often visited her German friend, taking to him fresh sheets of her manuscript, although she felt increasingly reluctant to discuss with him what she had written.

"Put it all in order," she would often say, "and do not read it until I have left Copenhagen."

She had arranged with Grete that when the summer came she would join her and Feruzzi in the South.

"The doctor whom I regularly visit said to me to-day : 'When I saw you first, I thought you were a pitiful, degenerate, unfortunate creature, but now that I have been able to observe you quietly I can see that you are a healthy and vigorous woman.'

"I cannot tell you how happy these words made me.

"In the evening I told my German friend what the doctor said, and the former observed :

"Now it will soon be time for you to paint again.'

"I stared at him horrified.

" 'Again ?' I said. 'Do realize that I have never yet painted, and that I do not yet know whether I shall ever be able to start painting.'

"He looked at me sternly. For the first time I saw a doubt in his eyes. He said :

" 'The healthier you become, the more



surely will every talent that resided in Andreas come to life in you—what was immortal in him, the divine spark, his artistic genius. And if you are not yet able to acknowledge the truth of this creative impulse which is slumbering within you, which must find an outlet somehow, you are at least in a position to teach others, especially young people who have a distinct talent for painting.'

"He had risen to his feet and was pacing the room in a state of excitement.

" 'I have read your confession, page for page, as you know, and I perceive something like timidity peeping out of avowal. You are a woman. Sometimes you are afraid of saying the last thing, for the last thing is the completely naked and the brutal. But all truth, in fact, is brutal. Much of it is even shameless, and there are very few people who can understand and endure the most intimate and perfect shame, that is the shame of shamelessness.'

"Then I took up his word: 'Do you mean that I am not candid enough?'

"He remained standing in front of me, took my hand, slipped my arm in his, and walked with me slowly up and down his room.

" 'Lili, you have described yourself as a bridge-builder, who is building a bridge from the solid bank of to-day. And you said yourself that you did not know whether the other bank was the past or the future.'

"Then he lapsed into silence.

"We were both standing in front of the window of his room, whence could be seen the

[illegible]

FRAGMENT OF LETTER WRITTEN BY EINAR WEGENER (ANDREAS SPARRE),  
DATED JANUARY 29, 1930

1841. 1842. 1843. 1844. 1845. 1846. 1847. 1848. 1849. 1850. 1851. 1852. 1853. 1854. 1855. 1856. 1857. 1858. 1859. 1860. 1861. 1862. 1863. 1864. 1865. 1866. 1867. 1868. 1869. 1870. 1871. 1872. 1873. 1874. 1875. 1876. 1877. 1878. 1879. 1880. 1881. 1882. 1883. 1884. 1885. 1886. 1887. 1888. 1889. 1890. 1891. 1892. 1893. 1894. 1895. 1896. 1897. 1898. 1899. 1900. 1901. 1902. 1903. 1904. 1905. 1906. 1907. 1908. 1909. 1910. 1911. 1912. 1913. 1914. 1915. 1916. 1917. 1918. 1919. 1920. 1921. 1922. 1923. 1924. 1925. 1926. 1927. 1928. 1929. 1930. 1931. 1932. 1933. 1934. 1935. 1936. 1937. 1938. 1939. 1940. 1941. 1942. 1943. 1944. 1945. 1946. 1947. 1948. 1949. 1950. 1951. 1952. 1953. 1954. 1955. 1956. 1957. 1958. 1959. 1960. 1961. 1962. 1963. 1964. 1965. 1966. 1967. 1968. 1969. 1970. 1971. 1972. 1973. 1974. 1975. 1976. 1977. 1978. 1979. 1980. 1981. 1982. 1983. 1984. 1985. 1986. 1987. 1988. 1989. 1990. 1991. 1992. 1993. 1994. 1995. 1996. 1997. 1998. 1999. 2000. 2001. 2002. 2003. 2004. 2005. 2006. 2007. 2008. 2009. 2010. 2011. 2012. 2013. 2014. 2015. 2016. 2017. 2018. 2019. 2020. 2021. 2022. 2023. 2024. 2025. 2026. 2027. 2028. 2029. 2030. 2031. 2032. 2033. 2034. 2035. 2036. 2037. 2038. 2039. 2040. 2041. 2042. 2043. 2044. 2045. 2046. 2047. 2048. 2049. 2050. 2051. 2052. 2053. 2054. 2055. 2056. 2057. 2058. 2059. 2060. 2061. 2062. 2063. 2064. 2065. 2066. 2067. 2068. 2069. 2070. 2071. 2072. 2073. 2074. 2075. 2076. 2077. 2078. 2079. 2080. 2081. 2082. 2083. 2084. 2085. 2086. 2087. 2088. 2089. 2090. 2091. 2092. 2093. 2094. 2095. 2096. 2097. 2098. 2099. 2100. 2101. 2102. 2103. 2104. 2105. 2106. 2107. 2108. 2109. 2110. 2111. 2112. 2113. 2114. 2115. 2116. 2117. 2118. 2119. 2120. 2121. 2122. 2123. 2124. 2125. 2126. 2127. 2128. 2129. 2130. 2131. 2132. 2133. 2134. 2135. 2136. 2137. 2138. 2139. 2140. 2141. 2142. 2143. 2144. 2145. 2146. 2147. 2148. 2149. 2150. 2151. 2152. 2153. 2154. 2155. 2156. 2157. 2158. 2159. 2160. 2161. 2162. 2163. 2164. 2165. 2166. 2167. 2168. 2169. 2170. 2171. 2172. 2173. 2174. 2175. 2176. 2177. 2178. 2179. 2180. 2181. 2182. 2183. 2184. 2185. 2186. 2187. 2188. 2189. 2190. 2191. 2192. 2193. 2194. 2195. 2196. 2197. 2198. 2199. 2200. 2201. 2202. 2203. 2204. 2205. 2206. 2207. 2208. 2209. 2210. 2211. 2212. 2213. 2214. 2215. 2216. 2217. 2218. 2219. 2220. 2221. 2222. 2223. 2224. 2225. 2226. 2227. 2228. 2229. 2230. 2231. 2232. 2233. 2234. 2235. 2236. 2237. 2238. 2239. 2240. 2241. 2242. 2243. 2244. 2245. 2246. 2247. 2248. 2249. 2250. 2251. 2252. 2253. 2254. 2255. 2256. 2257. 2258. 2259. 2260. 2261. 2262. 2263. 2264. 2265. 2266. 2267. 2268. 2269. 2270. 2271. 2272. 2273. 2274. 2275. 2276. 2277. 2278. 2279. 2280. 2281. 2282. 2283. 2284. 2285. 2286. 2287. 2288. 2289. 2290. 2291. 2292. 2293. 2294. 2295. 2296. 2297. 2298. 2299. 2300. 2301. 2302. 2303. 2304. 2305. 2306. 2307. 2308. 2309. 2310. 2311. 2312. 2313. 2314. 2315. 2316. 2317. 2318. 2319. 2320. 2321. 2322. 2323. 2324. 2325. 2326. 2327. 2328. 2329. 2330. 2331. 2332. 2333. 2334. 2335. 2336. 2337. 2338. 2339. 2340. 2341. 2342. 2343. 2344. 2345. 2346. 2347. 2348. 2349. 2350. 2351. 2352. 2353. 2354. 2355. 2356. 2357. 2358. 2359. 2360. 2361. 2362. 2363. 2364. 2365. 2366. 2367. 2368. 2369. 2370. 2371. 2372. 2373. 2374. 2375. 2376. 2377. 2378. 2379. 2380. 2381. 2382. 2383. 2384. 2385. 2386. 2387. 2388. 2389. 2390. 2391. 2392. 2393. 2394. 2395. 2396. 2397. 2398. 2399. 2400. 2401. 2402. 2403. 2404. 2405. 2406. 2407. 2408. 2409. 2410. 2411. 2412. 2413. 2414. 2415. 2416. 2417. 2418. 2419. 2420. 2421. 2422. 2423. 2424. 2425. 2426. 2427. 2428. 2429. 2430. 2431. 2432. 2433. 2434. 2435. 2436. 2437. 2438. 2439. 2440. 2441. 2442. 2443. 2444. 2445. 2446. 2447. 2448. 2449. 2450. 2451. 2452. 2453. 2454. 2455. 2456. 2457. 2458. 2459. 2460. 2461. 2462. 2463. 2464. 2465. 2466. 2467. 2468. 2469. 2470. 2471. 2472. 2473. 2474. 2475. 2476. 2477. 2478. 2479. 2480. 2481. 2482. 2483. 2484. 2485. 2486. 2487. 2488. 2489. 2490. 2491. 2492. 2493. 2494. 2495. 2496. 2497. 2498. 2499. 2500. 2501. 2502. 2503. 2504. 2505. 2506. 2507. 2508. 2509. 2510. 2511. 2512. 2513. 2514. 2515. 2516. 2517. 2518. 2519. 2520. 2521. 2522.

FRAGMENT OF LETTER WRITTEN BY LILI ELBE, DATED JUNE 14, 1931



harbour, and across a sea of roofs the sparkling water of the sound.

"We had both fallen silent. Then he resumed :

" 'This bridge, Lili, will go much farther into the past than you have any suspicion of to-day. In fact, across that abyss which separates man from woman. That is the remarkable thing about your fate, the unique thing that slumbers within you, namely, the emotional bond between the two sexes. This presentiment in your blood, which now pulsates through a woman's heart as it formerly pulsated through the heart of a man, rises now and again through the mists of ambiguity into a penetrating insight. And you have transferred this intuition to the pages of your confession in a scrappy sort of way and perhaps expressed it in inadequate and tentative words. And frequently your words only hint at the thing, frequently you are silent, probably out of suppressed shame. This new country, Lili, this new country of the soul, is lying dormant within you, and whether you like it not, it will go on expanding.'

"Then he was silent.

"I ensconced myself in the darkest corner of his room and shut my eyes. He had not seen that I was weeping. I went home quite alone. On another occasion I asked him if he would send me as a pupil his little daughter, a sixteen-year-old girl who had been attending the Copenhagen art school for a few months."

## XXII

**T**HE next morning Lili received a letter from Claude Lejeune.

“My dear little Lili,

“I will do no more than tell you that I have to be in Copenhagen on business within the next few days. I shall be there next week.

“In haste,

“Your Claude.”

For a whole week Lili and Claude were together from morning to night. She showed him the city and its extensive environs, and the whole atmosphere was redolent of spring.

She was happy. The best friend of her youth had at last joined her again.

He told her the latest news from Paris, and all the memories of the many, many happy hours which they had both spent there and in the South of France revived in her until her whole memory, as if awakened from darkness, now seemed to her like an iridescent firmament.

“Do you remember this—do you remember that?” asked Claude, who could hardly wait for an answer and went on talking.

And Lili said to everything: “Yes, yes,” and her eyes were shining with delight.

But now and again she had a secret feeling of something new and different stirring in her, and she did not know what it was.

"Claude and I were sitting this evening in a restaurant, when he suddenly said :

" 'Look here, Lili, I must take you home now. It is very late, and I am afraid that I shall be compromising you.'

"I was obliged to laugh loudly. Such words I had never before heard from Claude's mouth.

"But when I looked at him, I felt that he was quite serious in what he said, so I was obedient and rose to my feet.

"When we were seated side by side in the taxicab, I said to him :

" 'Claude, you look so solemn. Are you no longer as gay as you used to be when you were with me in Paris and on the Loire ?'

"Claude seized my hand and answered :

"Perhaps you are right. During these few days I have in fact observed something new in you, something which I did not notice at the time when, if I may so express it, you were not yet born. Now you are a healthy creature, but so defenceless. You are an adult woman, but you often seem to me like a child. You ought to have somebody who would be both a mother and a husband. In a few days I must be off again, and I find it very painful to leave you here alone, exposed to all dangers, as people in Copenhagen, where everybody knew Andreas, regard you, whether you admit it or not, as a

phenomenon, even when they are good to you. You cannot, in fact, run away from your past.'

"Claude looked at me long and earnestly. I asked him :

" 'What am I to do, then ?'

" 'You must go away from here.'

"I nodded.

" 'It is my intention to do so. Grete is expecting me in Italy in June. But before going there I want to go to Dresden once more, to the Women's Clinic, to spend a few summer days or weeks there, as I did last year.'

"Claude shook his head.

" 'What plans, what plans, Lili ! Nothing but long journeys. And quite alone. It is indeed very nice of Grete and her husband to want to have you with them, but don't forget they are a newly married pair. Have happy people, who have neglected their happiness so long, room for a third person ?'

"And then Claude was silent again, until he suddenly said :

" 'I must tell you that in the course of a few days I shall be transferred from Paris to Turkey, and I must start on my journey within a week at least.' Claude had for a number of years been a consular official.

"He gazed at me with his large, open, kind eyes and asked :

" 'Will you come with me, Lili ?'

"The question came so suddenly that I looked at him incredulously. 'Do you really want me with you ?'

"Claude said seriously : 'My little Lili, can

you doubt it? Will you marry me? Will you be my wife?"

"Quite involuntarily, as if I had not spoken myself, I said: 'Yes, oh, yes, Claude.' And I still heard my words ringing in my ear. They were uttered without agitation, as softly as a schoolgirl speaks.

"And consequently I did not even remark Claude's agitation when he suddenly took both my hands and kissed them. Only when Claude pressed me to him and kissed me on the mouth did I realize what he and I had said, and an unaccountable feeling flooded me, something which I had never perceived before, something blissful, yet frightening.

"And suddenly I heard, as if coming from afar, the words which Werner Kreutz had spoken to me the last time I had seen him: 'Go out and flutter your wings and glide into life. Enjoy your maiden's youth.'

"I tore myself from Claude in terror. He regarded me with startled eyes and asked me: 'What's the matter? Don't you like me any more, Lili?'

"I answered: 'You know quite well what I think of you.' I heard my own words; I scarcely recognized my voice. 'But I cannot marry you until I have asked Professor Kreutz. Without his permission I can do nothing. He alone has the right to dispose of me.'

"'What do you mean,' asked Claude, and his eyes regarded me distressfully.

"I groped for words. Involuntarily I thought of the conversation which I had had with my



German friend. I heard his words as he spoke to me : 'The shame of shamelessness.'

" 'Do say something,' I heard Claude say again.

"I stammered :

" 'Claude, I do not know if I ought to marry yet—perhaps I am not yet strong enough, although I look well enough. Let me first go to my helper in Germany. I must discuss with him what is to become of me, whither my path leads.'

"The following day, sixteen-year-old Ruth, the daughter of my German friend, was sitting with me. She was painting her first picture, a portrait of herself. I was standing behind her, but it was hardly necessary for me to tell her how to paint. I told her about myself and the Women's Clinic and many other things which moved me and which my little pupil perhaps did not really understand. We are very happy together. I saw that I could give her a good deal of useful advice. After she had gone, leaving the picture she had begun standing on the easel which I had inherited from—Andreas, I searched among the many pictures which were still left over from Grete's and Andreas' last exhibition (although most had been sold) for an empty piece of canvas. I stretched it on the frame, took the picture of my little pupil off the easel, and placed the empty canvas on it. And suddenly I took a brush myself and began to paint. What I wanted to paint I did not know. And I painted and painted.

"Suddenly there was a knock at the door. Another knock came and then another.

"I could not leave the easel. Something held me fast—and there was Claude standing behind me.

"‘You are painting, Lili?’ he inquired with astonishment. ‘And what is your picture intended to represent?’

"‘Yes, so you see, Claude,’ I answered, somewhat uncertainly, and again my mind went back to the conversation which I had recently had with my German friend. ‘I am trying to see whether I can make a start. Almost as soon as you leave I shall be starting on my long journey, and then I should like to take a picture with me to my Professor. My very first picture. He possesses pictures by Andreas, and I should like to see how I really compare with him as a painter. Yesterday evening when you brought me home I had an idea.’

"‘Yes, but what is your picture intended to represent, Lili, dear?’

"‘We were both standing in front of my picture, and he said : ‘Have you not painted a heart?’

"‘I was almost ashamed to admit it. ‘Yes,’ I said ; ‘it is my heart, which has been left behind in the Women’s Clinic.’

"‘Claude gazed at me sadly and inquiringly, and I took his hand.

"‘Don’t take it amiss, Claude ; you do not yet understand it. You see, the Women’s Clinic was my peaceful, white nursery. Consequently, Professor Kreutz must have this picture. He won’t be angry with me. Nor will he laugh at

which she had wandered like a sleepwalker on the edge of a precipice and yet always accompanied in a mysterious way by guardian angels. And she thought of her helper, and whether he would be satisfied with her. Was she worthy of all he had done for her? Not until this moment did it dawn upon her that she had been placed at a post which she was not allowed to leave. And she vowed to herself that nothing which had been sown in her personality should lie fallow. Everything in her should sprout and blossom and become fruit, in her life and in her work, in her art, which, as she now knew, was only waiting to be quickened into vigorous life.

How she had fared up till now she had recorded in her diary. Her confessions were almost completed. They were left behind in Copenhagen, in the shape of a bundle of foolscap covered with writing. One day her confessions—and she smiled at this thought—would burst upon mankind as the confessions of the first person who was not born unconsciously through a mother's travail, but fully conscious through her own pangs.

She wanted to be a bridge-builder.

She recalled the phrase of her German friend in Copenhagen and thought that she had perhaps built a slender bridge across that abyss which separates man and woman.

Like a far-off dream she saw in her mind's eye the Copenhagen railway station, all the companions and friends of those vanished days and weeks and months she had passed in the northern capital.

She also saw among them the little schoolgirl

Ruth, who had been her pupil. She had taught in order to learn that she too could henceforth paint, and that she was now strong enough to claim that immortal heritage which Andreas had bequeathed to her.

And she smiled again when she thought of the dark girlish head of her pupil Ruth etched against the bright background, where the palms of the South were waving in a blue spring sky ; and these palms and this sky were nothing but a corner of a picture which she possessed from Andreas, her dead brother, and which he had discovered during his last Italian summer, spent in the company of Grete and Feruzzi.

"Ruth," she had then said to her pupil, "I owe it to Andreas that I am now able to guide your first steps into your art. So for your first picture you should borrow something from what was perhaps Andreas' last picture."

Lili closed her eyes and continued to smile.

Then the train slowed down. She opened her eyes and looked out of the window : Neustadt ! Was it possible ?

In feverish haste she put on her hat and coat. Slowly the train moved again, and was now crossing the great bridge over the Elbe. Suddenly Dresden burst on her vision, her beautiful and beloved city of the Elbe. Domes and towers were reflected in the wide river, her river.

Trembling violently she glued herself to the carriage window. She clenched her teeth in a frenzied effort to keep back the tears. No, she must not weep now.

A few minutes later she was sitting in a car

which took her to the Women's Clinic. Chastened but cheerful she entered the portal of the home of her heart. Suddenly she hesitated, looked around her, and for the first time a doubt assailed her. "Why have I come here at all? And what do I want to ask him?" Thus she stood irresolute in the grounds.

The rain had ceased. The white birch trees lifted their light, bright crowns to the pale, watery sky. A couple of white-clad nurses nodded a greeting. Young doctors in professional attire strode through the park. Pregnant women were strolling there: "Blue crocuses," she thought, with a smile.

She remained standing and regarded the young women. Now she knew why she had come.

A white-clad figure stood at the door which led to the private ward, and with a cry of joy Lili threw herself into the motherly arms of the Matron. One nurse after another came up, and they all rejoiced at the reunion.

Everything was unchanged.

Lili took the Matron's hand. "Come with me just once through the house. I want to see all the corridors again."

And the Matron took her through all the corridors.

When she was tired out, she sat down in one of the large easy chairs in the long corridor through the great folding doors of which fell a beam of greenish light. Perhaps she would have to wait a long time.

She said the words to herself like a childish wish:

"Wait a long time, wait a long time."

She drank in the smell of ether and formalin as if she were thirsty. And all the familiar noises from the corridors and halls and rooms crowded in upon her.

She waited. A blissful peace invaded her mind.

The folding doors opened. A slender figure in a white overall, with dark hair over the lofty brow, came towards her.

Like a sleepwalker she let herself be led into the Professor's room.

And she listened fascinated to the strange, muffled voice. She had quite forgotten why she had come. She had forgotten everything she wanted to ask. She could only say: "Yes, Professor."

Suddenly Werner Kreutz looked at her sharply.

"What do you want to ask me? I can tell from your expression that you want something. Tell me what it is. . . ." Lili roused herself from her stupor. The secret anxiety which she could never banish now gripped her, and, looking the while calmly into his eyes, she said:

"Tell me, Professor, do you think that I am now strong enough for another operation, for I want so much to become a mother."

## DUSK

**F**RAGMENTS from Lili Elbe's letters to her German friend in the period from 14th June to 22nd August, 1931, from Dresden.

"14th June.

"After a short examination Professor Kreutz decided to operate upon me again. It will be the last time. Probably the operation will be performed on Tuesday, but promise me that Grete shall hear nothing about it. It would cast a shadow over her happiness. She would be worrying on my account, for which there is no need. I am so pleased to be here in my Women's Clinic again. The Professor has promised to read my 'Confessions' and to help me, should it be necessary, to correct them. He too is of opinion that they ought to appear as a book.

"For the rest I consider it splendid of him, instead of resting on his laurels, to incur the risk of operating upon me once more, so that I should be quite well and able to take a husband and perhaps also to have children to make me happier still. My helper has taught me to love Germany, as he has taught me to see what greatness dwells in this country.

"If the worst should befall (although I cannot believe in this eventuality) I want you

to know that I shall die happy, because I shall be allowed to remain until my last breath with him to whom I owe my life.

"More than ever, then, I am convinced that it is my moral duty to make my 'Confessions' public, in order to teach people not to judge."

"15th June.

"Now that I am again in Dresden, which is my home, and you have read the last word of my 'Confessions', 'I want so much to become a mother!' I feel impelled to write you, my friend and father-confessor, at very great length. I shall perhaps be somewhat prolix, but have patience with me. I have no time to lose. In two days I shall be operated upon again.

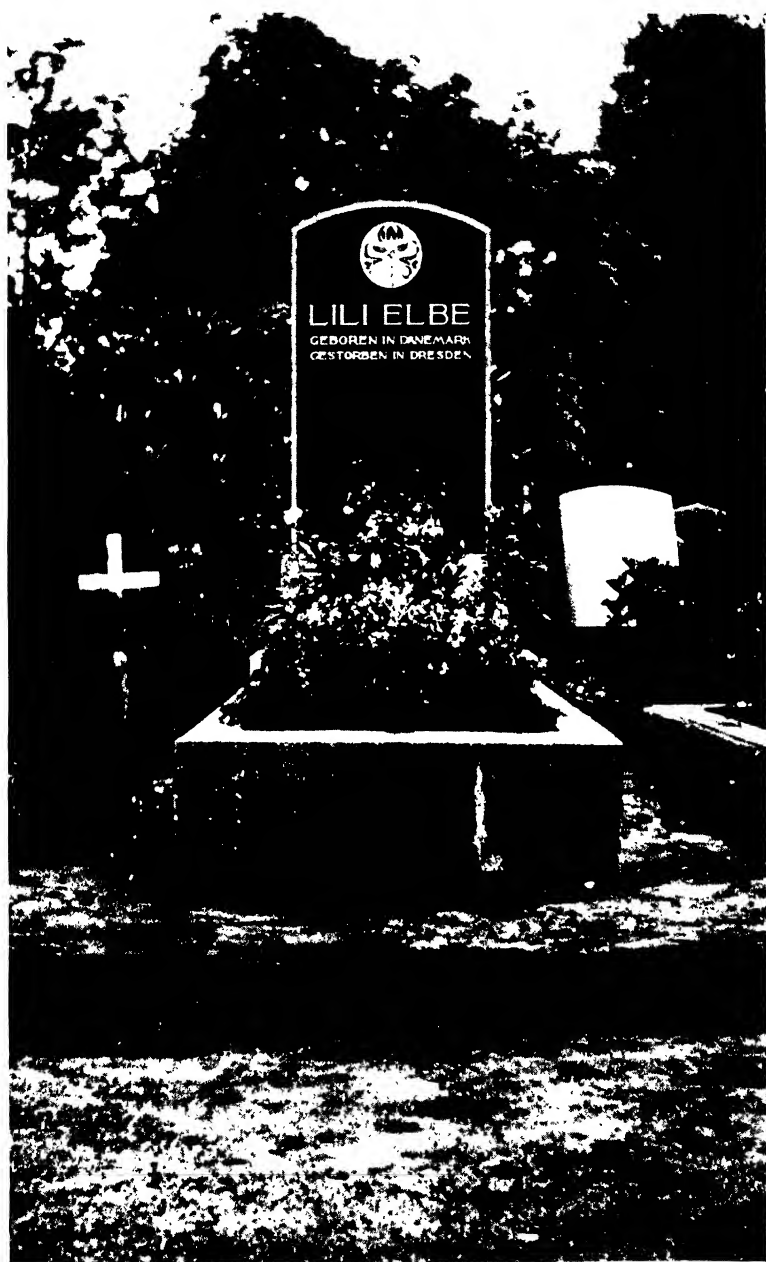
"You must sympathize with me in my desire for maternity, to have a child, for I want nothing more ardently than to demonstrate that Andreas has been completely obliterated in me—is dead. Through a child I should be able to convince myself in the most unequivocal manner that I have been a woman from the very beginning.

"Please understand me : the alienation from Andreas must inevitably crystallize into the resolution to forget a person who, as Andreas, has been a tragic obstacle which prevented me from experiencing all the mysteries and wonders which are part of the life of the girl, the maid, and the woman, in the same way as all other members of my sex. Because I lived a first life encased in a panser, from which I could not get free, my youth as girl and maiden has been



stolen from me, has been suppressed. This also explains why then I returned to Denmark from Germany. The atmosphere of Copenhagen felt most repellent. Denmark was the stage on which Andreas made his first appearance ; it was his home—for me, on the contrary, it was nothing less than a cast-off snake-skin. Consequently, Copenhagen was a very difficult place for me to return to, because I had to fight not only for my future, but against my past, which was really not my past at all, but the past of an alien creature who had also robbed me of my home. Andreas, therefore, appears to me to-day in the light of a usurper. For the same reason I find it hard to endure the South and West of Europe, because everything there is bound up with Andreas' past. On the other hand, my love for Germany, for Berlin, and above all for Dresden, is easy to understand ; Andreas did not know these cities, these landscapes and the atmosphere of Germany, his acquaintance with them being of the most cursory character when he was in a dying condition. What a boon for me it was to be here, where it is only present and future for me, and where there is no past connected with Andreas ! Here I have merely to fight for my future from the basis of the present, unburdened by the painful past of another person.

“But I must return to Denmark in order to complete my ‘Confessions’, to that atmosphere which is most painful for me because it was there that I felt most sharply the pangs of experience, and it was there that I could avow it the



DENMARK DIED IN DRESDEN



soonest and most faithfully. For the rest : time presses. . .

"You, dear friend, in your tender way and the Danes in their coarser and more brutal manner (because they have only eyes for the commonplace and the uncomplicated—they call it 'common sense' and the 'normal', because it is the most comfortable, and my countrymen are intellectual, and not only intellectual but damnably comfortable), have frequently asked me whether I could remember anything of Andreas' erotic emotions. In putting this question people touched me on the sorest point of my sensibilities, without their knowing it. If Nature in alliance with the art of my Professor had not come to my assistance, so that I no longer felt anything in my blood of these emotions of Andreas, of the erotic sensations which he had experienced with women, I should have felt defiled and befouled as a woman by this feeling of alien sexual emotions.

"I am fighting against the prepossession of the Philistine who looks upon me as a phenomenon, as an abnormality. As I am now, I am a perfectly ordinary woman among other women. The scepticism of the Philistine, or rather the easy-going neighbours who only recognize the commonplace as the justification of life, who invest me and my fate with the quality of a sensation, often depresses me so severely that I find myself wanting to die and playing with the idea of suicide.

"But the will to live is stronger in me than any humiliation which I have experienced from

my fellows and which may be in store for me. I have duties towards Grete, who on my account has hazarded her existence in order to liberate me from the Andreas integument—towards my Professor, who allied himself to me with his medical art and created me for what I am, that is, gave me justification as a living creature, made me into a normal woman.

“Because of all these obligations I must preserve and strengthen my will to live.

“If I should succumb spiritually and seek suicide, everybody would be right in saying that what had happened to me had been contrary to Nature, an audacious challenge of the unnatural and the artificial to the natural and to Nature; a creature born as an hermaphrodite must remain an hermaphrodite, especially if it has lived as an hermaphrodite for a lifetime. That without the operation performed by the Professor I should have died with Andreas more than a year ago does not trouble them. But that I, Lili, am vital and have a right to life I have proved by living for fourteen months. It may be said that fourteen months is not much, but they seem to me like a whole and happy human life. The price which I have paid seems to me very small.

“If sooner or later I should succumb physically, I am quite reconciled. I shall at least have known what it is to live.

“My will to live! On this account I have steeled my strength in recent months, and often forced myself to do many things which Andreas once did or perhaps did—yet I was often displeased

when I found that I had done the thing in question not only as well as, but better than, Andreas. I was often vexed to discover this, for it reminded me of the virile qualities associated with Andreas.

"Recently, a few days before my departure for Dresden, I looked over all the photographs which had been taken of me in the Women's Clinic a year ago. What a childishly simple and effeminate expression all the pictures of that time reveal ! How imploring and helpless the glance ! Then I looked in the mirror to see what I am like now. My face has become smoother, and healthier, and fresher, the whole body more taut and feminine. But my eyes have a self-conscious expression. I am not pleased at this ; life has hardened me.

"Now I have returned once more. Here, where the strong will of another stands between me and the outside world, as my protector and defender, I can cast off the assumed sternness of my character. It is not really sternness, but a very fragile shell around a completely defenceless creature.

"Here you have, dear friend, the explanation of my whole character, of my endeavour and my deepest longing ; all that I desire is nothing less than the last fulfilment of a real woman ; to be protected from life by the sterner being, the husband. I think death would be more welcome to me than, for instance, a life as artist, even as a great and fêted artist on my own account. For I do not want to be an artist, but a woman. Hence I must shut all artistic creation

out of my life—you will remember I insisted on this during our last conversation—because I cannot continue the work of the virile artist who was Andreas.

“And in contrast to Andreas, who had to create the works of art from inner compulsion, my own life feels deflected from everything that constitutes art. Do I make myself clear? It is not with my brain, not with my eyes, not with my hands that I want to be creative, but with my heart and with my blood. The fervent longing in my woman’s life is to become the mother of a child. Whether this wish can be fulfilled or not, the fact that I can openly acknowledge this desire from the fullness of a pure woman’s heart is an infinite happiness for me. The fact that I may experience this happiness justifies everything that has happened to me here in Dresden.

“And because it is so, dear friend, the Confessions which I have placed in your hands must end on the note that expresses my strongest craving : ‘I want so much to become a mother.’

“Now you will understand me and now you will be able to teach others to understand me.

“In two days I shall probably be operated upon. It is to be the last time. So it is well that I have poured out all my heart to you to-day.

“16th June.

“Now I am just as insignificant as I was last year.

“I believe I am to be operated upon to-morrow. I am not afraid of the pain. I should like

to stay here for good. I am sitting outside in the garden. Now and then I am seized by a vague anxiety. Then I stroll through the grounds between the fir trees. What need have I to be anxious? I know that everything will turn out well. Of course I shan't die . . . that would, indeed, be treachery of life. Write me . . . that comforts me. Perhaps the book will appear while I am lying here.

“17th July.

“I am so weak. How is the book getting on?

“18th July.

“To-day it is a month since I was operated upon . . . progress is being maintained . . . and my mind is no longer dwelling upon the subject of death. Last night I dreamed that a friend took me in his arms and carried me off, and I was happy. I have gone through so much, but so much is expected of me. Now I know that I am like all women.

July.

“My friend Iven Person of the Theatre Royal, Copenhagen (the only one of Andreas' friends to extend his friendship to me), and his ravishingly beautiful Ebba, came to see me yesterday. It was delightful. I wept for joy. They were so good to me. Iven said that when he was back in Copenhagen he would arrange a lecture for me; the most eminent artists were to take part in it. I was to have all the proceeds. Iven kept saying, 'Don't worry, Lili. Everything



will turn out well. All you have to do is to get better.' Iven is so strong and he has a heart that feels for others. And both of them said that I had grown prettier. Much to my delight.

"Should I write a preface to the book, to explain why, when speaking of Andreas, I always use the third person, as in a novel? But, my dear friend, what other form of narrative could I have chosen? I could not relate the story of Andreas' life in the first person. Nor could I employ the third person when speaking of my own life and experiences, after Andreas had vanished. I was too close to everything. Hence, I often found it repugnant to speak of myself as of a third person. How lucky I was to secure the long narrative which Andreas dictated to Niels in Berlin before the first operation!

"Yes, if I had been able to wait before completing the book, as you always advised me, I could perhaps have recorded everything in a better, and stronger, and more direct style. You say that the people who read my book will want to know something about the nature and progress of the operations.

"Ought I to say that when Andreas was taking part in Iven's ballet in Paris, he suddenly started to menstruate, without knowing it, just like a woman, that these discharges then recurred at regular intervals, and that their character was first perceived by Werner Kreutz. Ought I to say that the first operation in Berlin was the castration of Andreas, that immediately afterwards his voice changed into mine and his handwriting into mine, but that Andreas' blood

was already my blood before the first operation, full of excretions of my ovaries ?

“Shall I relate that a creature who was not yet I, but a castrated man, a being who was neither man nor woman, entered the Women’s Clinic in the spring of last year ? Ought I to say that the male organ was then removed, the body opened and my ovaries found, which, however, had been stunted by the wrong treatment in Paris ? Ought I to say that then I, Lili, was supplied with fresh ovaries from a woman of six-and-twenty, which ‘normalized’ my whole being and its functions, that henceforth I was and am a woman like other women, and that I have now returned to Dresden for the last operation to effect a natural outlet from the womb.

“Oh, dear friend, more than this I cannot write. I can discuss all this with you, as I proved in Copenhagen. You know full well how I have striven in order to find the simplest and smoothest language for my ‘Confessions’. I am indeed no writer. And this book, which arose out of diary entries and descriptive extracts and letters, I had to write in such a short time, between late autumn and spring, between two very serious operations, as if between two battles. To be sure, I hope through this book to be able to provide for my material existence. Can I be reproached for that ?

“No ! And then I am writing all this in order to render an account of myself and my helper. That he, having read and approved the German text thereof, is satisfied with my narrative, is my greatest joy and deepest satisfaction. I could

not give more than a picture of the soul, a human document, a 'confession', as you call my narrative. And if many chapters read like a novel, you and, above all, my helper, and Grete, and Claude, you all know that it is no romance, but nothing less than the strictly veracious life-story of a creature seeking clarity and peace and rest, and who wants to remain with her friend as his companion.

"I should like to give you a little present. Hence I am sending you Andreas' book, *Le Livre des Vikings*, which he published in 1924, in conjunction with Ch. Gyuot, at L'Edition d'Art H. Piazza, Paris. You are to keep it as a memento. Look at the first page! Andreas has written on it: 'To my dear father—from Andreas, Paris 21.2.1924. And underneath I have written: 'To my friend . . . Lili Elbe, Copenhagen, 5th June, 1931.' On the 5th June I was with you for the last time. The following day I left for Dresden. When shall I be with you again?

"7th August.

"I was talking to the Professor to-day about my book, and what he said about it gave me keen pleasure. Next week he is going on his vacation. Just think of it, they have not yet allowed me to get up. But it cannot be long now before I am on my feet again. I think there should be a foreword to the book stating, 'This book deals with my life and my transformation; it is written by a creature who is still weak and impotent. . . .'"

“13th August.

“The Professor has left for his holiday. My condition brings me to despair. I cannot see that I am making any progress, but there are moments when I am so tired that I almost wish I could die ; but I have nor received permission to do this, as I know the Professor will not have it.

“15th August.

“I cannot write about my last operation—it was an abyss of suffering. It is well that Grete does not know. I am still so weak ; but in Sept. I shall return to Copenhagen. I must put my papers in order, for Claude’s sake.

August.

“I don’t want to bother you with my troubles, but it is now two months since the strict Professor has kept me in bed. It was a terrible time, and I am so unutterably tired of it. I do not expect to return to Copenhagen before the end of September.

“22nd August.

“I am so tired, I am constantly tired, and I am still lying in bed. Almost every day I receive flowers from Grete . . . she is happy. If I had the strength, I would write and tell her that I am progressing. She would come to me ; but that I don’t want. I am so lonely and so weak. But when I am most dejected, a letter

comes from Claude ; he is waiting for me—dear, dear Claude.

The shadows were closing round Lili Elbe. She wrote one more letter at the beginning of September. It was addressed to her sister.

“Now I know that death is near. Last night I dreamt about Mother. She took me in her arms and called me Lili . . . and Father was also there. . . .”

On the 12th September Lili's brother was summoned to Dresden by telegraph. She was no longer able to speak. She could only whisper. But her eyes were shining when her brother was with her. She wrote her last words on a card. She gave the card to her faithful nurse in the Women's Clinic, “*Au revoir*, sister.” Then she fell asleep and did not wake again. Paralysis of the heart put an end to her short young woman's life, which was so excruciating and yet so wonderful.

Her dearest wish was to be allowed to rest in the cemetery near the Women's Hospital, and on the 15th September, 1931, her wish was fulfilled.

When Lili Elbe was with her German friend for the last time—on the 5th June, 1931, the day before her last journey to Dresden, she opened a book. It was the first volume of Hans Jager's shattering confessions, *Sick Love*. Lili read for a while. Suddenly she paused, handed her friend the book, pointed to a passage therein, and said : “If I should not return, may it be appropriate to

conclude my book with these words from Hans Jager."

With a trembling voice Lili Elbe read the passage :

" 'When I myself am no longer here, I want my sad book of love to be my legacy, a testimony that I once lived. I imagine that this book will be read, read as few books are, by all who are unhappy in love, into whose hands it shall fall year after year, and I feel as if I could shake them all by the hand. And I have such an unspeakable longing ; it is in fact the only longing that I have, to say farewell to all—oh, none can realize what ultimate peace this would be for me.' "

THE END









